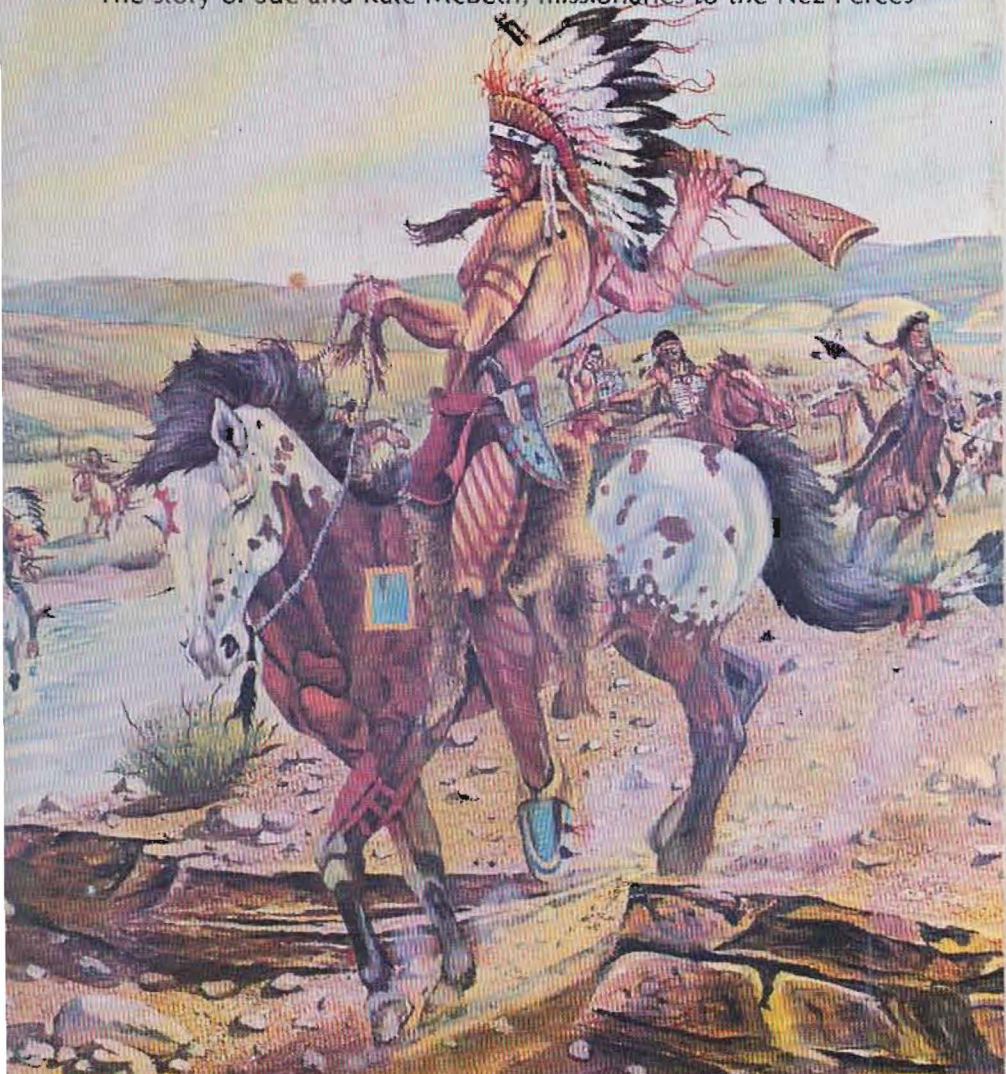


Out of the Blanket

The story of Sue and Kate McBeth, missionaries to the Nez Percés



Allen Conrad Morrill & Eleanor Dunlop Morrill

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The Story of Sue and Kate McBeth
Missionaries to the Nez Perces

by

Allen Conrad Morrill
Eleanor Dunlap Morrill

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We
Dedicate
OUT OF THE BLANKET,
the brain child of our age,
To
the children of our youth,
Walter, Gertrude, Janet

CONTENTS

Preface	9
Chapter I Deo Volente	15
Chapter II Flee For My Life	44
Chapter III We-Ye-Kin Troubles	60
Chapter IV The Little White Cottage	71
Chapter V And Then the Choctaws.....	91
Chapter VI The Rebel Heart	111
Chapter VII All My Freightd Ships	132
Chapter VIII Away Out in Idaho	148
Chapter IX These Ominous Signs	169
Chapter X Mizpah Interlude	194
Chapter XI Nine-Pipes	220
Chapter XII Another Ebenezer	242
Chapter XIII Egypt and Israel	268
Chapter XIV The Measuring Woman	292
Chapter XV Oh, How Changed.....	337
Chapter XVI Out of the Blanket.....	361
Notes	383
Bibliography.....	412

PREFACE

Out of the Blanket has evolved over many years from the authors' childhood backgrounds: one in the shadow of Harvard University, the other on the bare Camas Prairie of Idaho. Dr. Clifford M. Drury's biographies of the Whitmans and the Spaldings provided the first incentive to trace the further development of those early beginnings of the white man's impact upon the Nez Perces. We have carried that account from Spalding's death in 1874 through the next forty years into the twentieth century to the threshold of America's entry into world affairs, 1915. Contributing to our growing search was a lifetime of acquaintance among the Nez Perces, some of whom are descendants of the principal actors in those controversial years.

Our main objective has been to tell the story of the mid-nineteenth century, dominant, white Protestant mission effort on the "last frontier" in Idaho. The Ohio home and earlier experiences of the two missionary sisters who succeeded Spalding, Sue and Kate McBeth, are given as background for their reservation life. We have tried to recapture the vicissitudes and joys of these workers with as accurate emotional over-tones as possible. A corollary of their daily struggles were the razor-keen conflicts with the Indian agents, the members of the tribe, the clergy, and between the sisters themselves. From their unpublished journals and correspondence are recorded the clashes and results of the McBeths' interpretation of Presbyterianism upon their Nez Perce students.

The basic ideas of this story are based upon facts, letters, and research; however, the conversation is of course modeled on the style of letters and diaries of the two sisters. We believe we are, in their conversation, reproducing the manner and content of what they would have said. Although we have tried to be as accurate as possible, there may be inadvertent errors which we regret. Particularly there could be mistakes in Nez Perce names. We shall appreciate receiving any verified corrections for

omissions or errors. Others have written more detailed chronicles of the tribe, but for the historical, geographical, climatic, and current descriptive features of this story, the reader is referred to the introduction of Alvin M. Josephy, Jr.'s *THE NEZ PERCE INDIANS* and *OPENING of the NORTHWEST*. No further explanation could add to those facts.

Numerous friends and strangers have helped us in accumulating our material. Foremost is Dr. Drury's continued encouragement which has kept our enthusiasm renewed. Members of the McBeth family have all been cooperative and generous with their time and records: Mr. and Mrs. Edwin Pugh, Mrs. Galen Lewis, Miss Kate Bossinger, and Mr. F.A. McBeth. Dr. Merle Wells of the Idaho Historical Society Museum has given us willing access to records and to his many helpful suggestions. Among the institutions that have aided our search are the Eastern Washington Historical Society, Spokane, (Miss Edna Reinbach); Fairfield, Iowa, Public Library (Mrs. Mary Lutes); Geneva College Library, Beaver Falls, Pennsylvania (Miss Mary Cleland); Jefferson Barracks Historical Museum, St. Louis, Missouri (Miss Priscila Knuth); Peabody Museum, Cambridge, Massachusetts (Mrs. Katherine B. Edsall); Presbyterian Historical Society, Philadelphia, Pennsylvania (Mr. William B. Miller); Lewiston Morning Tribune, Idaho, (Mrs. Margaret D. Allen); Missouri Historical Society, St. Louis, Missouri; Monmouth College Library, Monmouth, Illinois; Newberry Library, Chicago, Illinois; Register General's Office, Edinburgh, Scotland; Public Library, Sterling, Scotland; Washington State University Library, Pullman; The Women's Archives, Radcliffe College, Cambridge, Massachusetts.

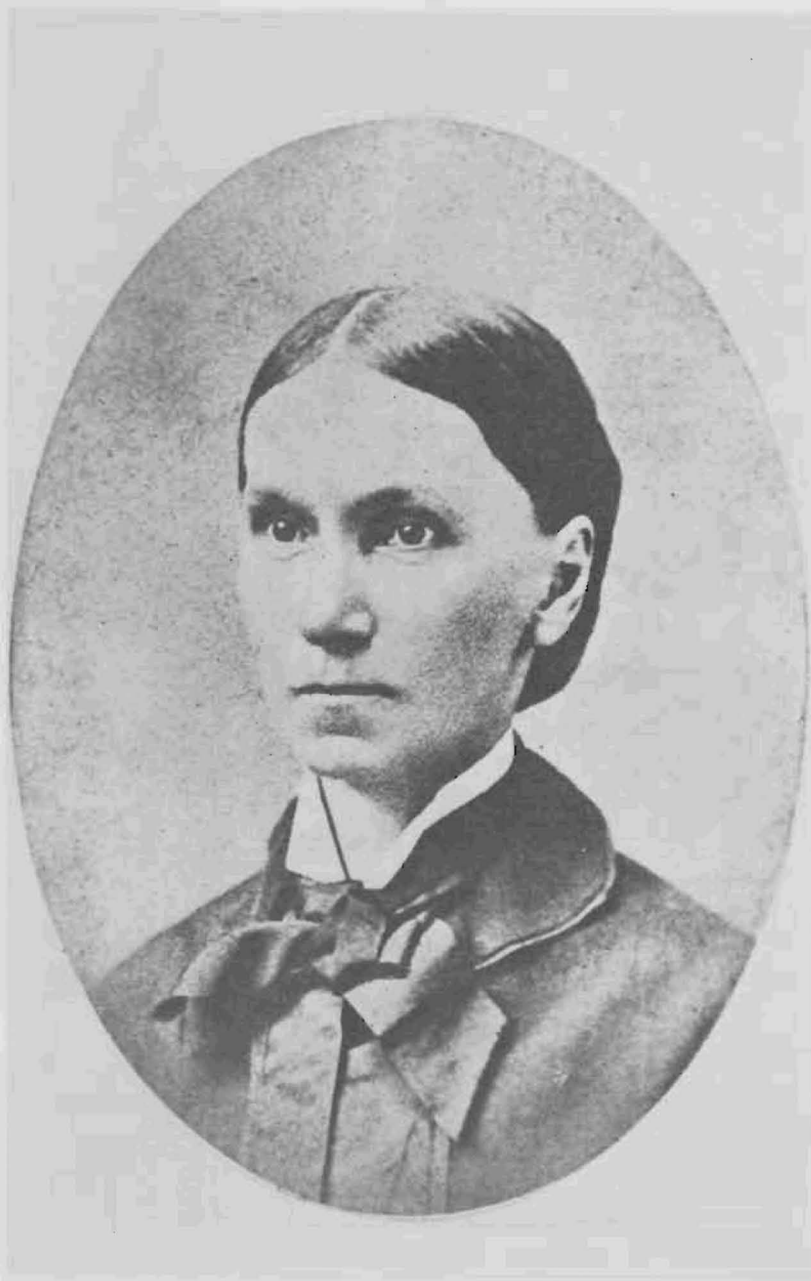
We acknowledge the helpful interest of many Presbyterians: In Iowa — the Reverend Ed Essler of Fairfield, the Reverend James A. Glass of Signourney; in Ohio — the Reverend Edward Burgett Welsh of Wooster; in Doune, Scotland — the Reverend James Watt. Countless other individuals far too numerous to list have been of assistance; among them James T. Babb of Yale University Library and Homer G. Benton of Minneapolis, Minnesota. Especially in Idaho we thank the Reverend E. Paul Hovey of Lewiston; Mr. and Mrs. Robert Strom, Mr. and Mrs.

Leo Bovey, and Mrs. Ivor Longteig, Jr., of Craigmont; Mrs. Joseph Blackeagle and Mrs. Lily Davis of Lapwai; and Sister M. Alfreda Elsensohn of Cottonwood.

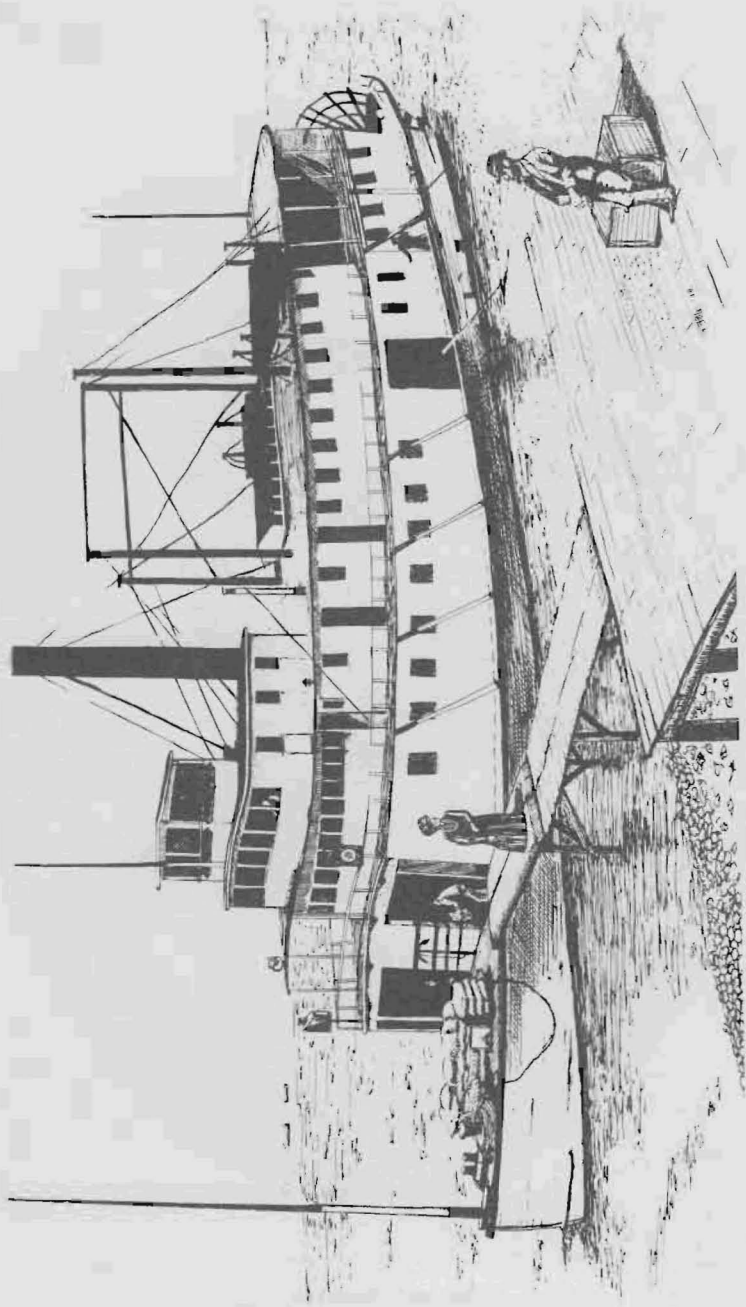
We also appreciate the help and advice of professor Earl J. Larrison and his staff of the University Press of Idaho in preparing this work for publication.



Kate McBeth (photo by Jane Gay).



Susan L. McBeth.



CHAPTER I

DEO VOLENTE

The ninth of October, 1873, was a hot Indian summer day in Lewiston, Idaho Territory. Waiting at the wharf on the Snake River of the pioneer little sunburned town was a stocky, white-bearded, clerical figure. As the river boat was tied to the dock, the Reverend Monteith readily identified the woman he was meeting. Slight but erect, Miss Sue McBeth was unmistakably the eastern stranger with her proper traveling duster and prim bonnet. Her fellow travelers, several Chinese, an Indian or two, and jostling, noisy frontier men, with an ostentatious show of western gallantry, waited until she was helped down the rough gangplank and put into the custody of the minister.

"Miss McBeth? I'm Reverend Monteith; my son John, the Nez Perce agent, was too busy to come so here I am . . ."

"Oh, how kind of you, but first how about my baggage?"

"It will be all taken to the Hotel de France, where you will spend the night before we go on to Lapwai tomorrow."

Sue gathered up her skirts and followed the older man, who guided her carefully toward the wooden sidewalk, for he immediately was aware of her noticeable limp. William Monteith in his early sixties observed that the little lady had large, keen, observant, expressive, gray eyes with a fleeting depth of sorrow reflected in them. Noting her unusually firm and determined chin, he recognized a "strong Scotch will."¹ When they stopped at a crosswalk to allow the dust to settle from a large dray passing, he was conscious of her "queenly bearing,"² and the quiet dignity of her short stature. Despite Sue's plain, severe, almost masculine dress, entirely appropriate to the calling of a lady missionary who could hold with no frivolity of the Victorian era, the minister was struck with her womanliness. By the time the agency rig deposited them at the Hotel de France, she was gratified to have found in the Reverend

Monteith a gentleman of the old school who still retained the flavor of his Princeton background in this unregenerate wild West which she had finally reached on this stiflingly hot day. As she signed the register in the lobby of the large, rambling frame house-hotel, she was conscious not only of the hushed watchful loungers but also of the distinctly French accent of the landlady, Mme. Bonhaus. From her Scotch Seceder upbringing, she made an almost automatic Anglo-Saxon association of foreigners with Catholicism and was instantly on her guard. A little over two years ago in the *Chicago Advance* she had read the prejudiced reasoning of Spalding and later his famous controversy over the Whitman massacre. This was but one expression among numerous other books and articles based on the prevalent Protestant fear of Catholicism in the 1870s.³ Like the majority of her Protestant contemporaries, she was convinced of the imminent danger of American Popery, and felt that one of her basic missionary duties was to combat Catholicism in any form wherever she met it.⁴

Sue had hardly had time to freshen up a bit and change her limp dust-laden blouse before the gong announced supper. After she was introduced as the "lady missionary come to the Lapwai Agency," she bowed her head for her private grace. When she raised her eyes, she was acutely conscious of the awkward pause that had silenced all conversation which had been raucously filling the room when she entered. Feeling self-consciously responsible for the embarrassed quiet, Sue made a general inquiry about the abundance of vegetables in the steaming dishes on the table. As suddenly as the silence had descended, volubility broke out. During the rest of the meal, everyone up and down the long table joined in to enlighten the newcomer about the wonders of the Lewiston valley.

"By God, lady, you never seen such God-damned, pardon me ma'am, cherries or peaches as this here place . . ."

"Oh, yes, everybody's got Chinks to work for them, like Nellie's Soo Wong, the cook here . . ."

"This here's the best climate anywheres, never snows in the valley, but now up there on them hills . . ."

"Hey, you biscuit pusher there, get me, wil ya' . . ."

"No, I wouldn't say as it was an easy country, 'specially on

women and hosses, but it's a great country. Hell, you gotta expect . . . "

"The soil's the best anywheres. Why a feller was telling me a while back that the first wheat he grew up on the prairie was so God-Almighty high that when he went to cut it, a person couldn't hardly see the hosses' Goddamned ears . . . "

" 'Course potatoes grow here, anything grows, strawberries as big almost as your fist, and . . . "

"Hot — oh, this ain't so hot as it can git — hottern hell most of the summer, and no rain, not a drop for months and months."

Shocked by the casual conversational profanity of her dinner companions, Sue retreated to her room intent on begging her Presbyterian God forgiveness for these lost souls. However was she to teach the Nez Perce tribe about the white man's God if these were the white men they knew? She had hoped and prayed fervently that she'd be spared such a rough element on this frontier mission field. More than ten years ago, that same element of decadent humanity had scandalized her visits in Sigourney, Iowa, had terrified her when the Texas ruffians had ridden across the border into the Choctaw territory, and had hounded her efforts in the Jefferson Barracks during the war. Surely it had not been too much to ask God that here in this new country she would be free to concentrate solely on saving the souls of the Nez Percés and not to be accountable for wicked white men's doings. But obviously God had again said, "NO," for already on this very first evening in Idaho so near the Nez Perce Reservation she had found these evil white influences firmly ensconced.

Concentrating on her Bible to find a pertinent passage upon which to base her intercessory prayers, Sue was not at first aware that a dust storm was enveloping the Lewiston valley. Her coughing and choking ultimately disrupted her devotions sufficiently to draw her to the window. Then she saw the swirling alkaline dust that filled the little town, seeping into her room. Tired and disheartened as she was, Sue could not sleep until well after dark, when the billowing dust subsided and she was able to breathe again more normally.

The same fine dust followed the agency livery the next morning as the wagon climbed out of the already steaming



Fig. 1 Map of the Out of the Blanket region.

valley. A circuitous rough wagon trail wound up the rise of some two thousand feet. To Sue's eager questions about the Nez Perces, their surroundings and habits, and most important of all, about the state of the Nez Perces' souls, the agent's father responded with directness and tact. They bounced and joggled over the old trail which Sue learned was the original one used by the United States soldiers when Lapwai was an early outpost. After resting the horses at the top of the grade, the driver gave them their rein for the next ten miles over a comparatively level terrain. A hot breeze came up from the rear and hurried the following clouds of dust to catch up with them, circling the wagon, blotting out visibility with its choking obstruction. At the edge of another canyon, Sue braced herself for the sharp descent. The driver gripped the brake and the wagon started its grinding protesting way down the steep side. Over rocks, through gullies, and wash-outs, swaying from side to side, "slipping and sliding and pitching headforemost,"⁵ the two passengers clutched the sides of the hack. Around a sharp curve, the Lapwai valley lay before them.

Again the horses were halted, and Sue peered through the dust to the little settlement below. Most of the level valley floor lay to the west of Lapwai Creek. The little parched gardens appeared hopelessly burned; the hills above them were brown, crisscrossed by hundreds of trails where gaunt cattle and Indian ponies grubbed for roots. Outlining the edges of Lapwai Creek, a few stunted cottonwood trees and thorn bushes gave the only shade, a quivering relief from the blistering heat. Numerous Indian tepees were grouped about a little white frame church. Beyond the tepees were a few square box-houses which straggled toward the old military buildings and fort. The Reverend Monteith pointed out to Sue their destination, the approximate location of the agency building, beyond their view, three miles toward the north down the valley where the Lapwai Creek emptied into the Clearwater River.

Sue lay in bed her first night in Lapwai gazing up toward the clear sky in the blessed relief of darkness after the heat of the day. Again she appealed to her God to comfort her sick and disappointed heart. The reality of this desolate place held no

slight resemblance to the feeling of elation in Ohio when she had finally decided to follow the Reverend Ainsley's urging to come to Idaho, to give her life to the Nez Perces. Where was the spiritual glow that had enfolded her then and had accompanied her across the continent on that month long wearying journey?

After her arrival at the agency, the Reverend W.J. Monteith had introduced her to John Monteith, the official in charge of the reservation. Here she learned for the first time that she was to share living quarters with the Monteiths. She would have one room of their government house because the Ainsleys with several active growing children were already crowded in the only "teacher's house" at the fort.⁶ She had come expecting to go on to Kamiah, that romantic spot where Lewis and Clark had been the first white men the Nez Perces saw. But again "NO," now the veteran H.H. Spalding had been transferred there, and she was to remain here in Lapwai as a teacher-missionary with the Reverend George Ainsley, her old acquaintance from the time she was with the Choctaw Mission in Oklahoma. As she fell asleep to the trickle of Lapwai Creek, she dreamed that waves of wild savages were tumbling down the rocky surrounding hills on the helpless little hamlet below.

Twenty-seven years ago as a young woman in her late twenties, Sue had left the family home in Wellsville, Ohio, to strike out into pioneer territory in Iowa. Nothing in those teaching or busy war-filled years of emotional crises had prepared her, even at forty-three, to understand all the underlying currents and counter-currents in the politics of reservation life. There were at least three levels of conflicting and yet interwoven pressures during the 1870s in the Nez Perce country. Overlying all was the far-away yet powerfully threatening Commissioner of Indian Affairs in the Department of the Interior at Washington, D.C., with an average length of tenure of approximately two years. The slowness of communication, the lack of any real knowledge of conditions in Idaho, and the constant vacillation and uncertainty in policy-making resulted in chaos from the directives and special investigations launched from D.C., three thousand miles away.

Although the local Indian superintendent on the reservation was officially appointed and paid by the office in Washington, he

was at the mercy of the church denominational board for the original recommendation to the commissioner. In this regard his was not strictly a political appointment. President Grant had instituted in 1870 an arrangement with various churches to make nominations for Indian superintendents for those tribes where they had been carrying on mission work. These denominations were to be responsible not only for the nomination of the local agents but also for the general conduct of religious and educational work. Despite the fact the churches made appointments for various and sundry positions on the reservations, the government paid the salaries. This was true of the Nez Perces, where John Monteith had been appointed without the recommendation of H.H. Spalding who had preferred another candidate.

Besides the dual allegiance Mr. Monteith owed the U.S. government and the church leaders who had nominated him, he had a third area of explosive disagreement: the suspicion and distrust the two races, Indian and white, held for each other. The last hundred years of broken and misunderstood treaties and promises and the ruthless disregard of his rights had given the Indian no confidence in the white man's word. On his part, the white pioneer lived in hysterical dread that the "treacherous red man" might at any moment take to the warpath — murdering, burning, pillaging. The white and red men were mutually ignorant and unintelligible to each other in language and in tradition.

This was the background, most of it mercifully hidden from Sue as she awoke her first morning in Lapwai. Looking about her bare room, she began making plans to unpack and to arrange the meager rough furniture. Against the inside wall separating the two sections of the house was a little rusty cast iron stove. On this warm fall morning she could not know that it would be one of her chief comforts in the bone-chilling winter months ahead. The bed, located in the outer back corner of the room, was attached by one stout post with two-by-fours to the wall, "sink fashion." After the jolting hack ride of the day before, Sue had slept well on the cured, sweet-smelling, crackling bunchgrass that filled the mattress tick. Opposite the stove under a small window was a table, attached to the wall in the same manner as

the bed. Two or three rickety home made chairs, a stool or two, and one company chair, its bottom covered with a frayed buffalo skin, stood about the room. Nearer the table on a crude bench was the water bucket with its dipper. Along the wall across a closed door into the main house ran shelves holding a miscellaneous assortment of left over cracked and chipped cooking utensils. The entrance, once the back door of the house, opened into the wood shed and storage space, shared by both sections of the building. From this stoop, a well-worn path led to the double privy standing in a small grove of cottonwoods which offered such discreet privacy as this bare country afforded.

After her morning's devotions and breakfast, Sue first attacked the layer of white dust that covered everything. She was uncomfortably suspicious that on tomorrow morning and all the mornings of the long dry summer seasons ahead this same fine alkaline dust would coat the contents of the cottage. She was thankful that the country afforded sufficient wood to provide cedar shakes for the roof and a rough wide planked floor. With some gay colored calico hung over the shelves, even this bare room could assume a homey Christian atmosphere suitable for the work of the new missionary teacher.

Many were the concerns of this frontier missionary lady. What and how was she to do this work? She knew that she was the first unattached unmarried female to come to the Nez Perce reservation, and she realized that undoubtedly she had been appointed against a good deal of opposition. For some thirty years, it had been the policy of the Presbyterian Board of Foreign Missions that their missionaries must be married men with "good, healthy, patient, well informed, devotedly pious wives."⁷

But it had become apparent, first to the actual missionaries in the field, later to the home office in Philadelphia, that just as frequently these paragons of wifely virtues were quite helplessly a burden to mission work. Establishing and maintaining a household which often welcomed a new baby every other year was practically a full time job for both parents in a wilderness.⁸ Only a year before Sue's arrival among the Nez Percés, Henry T. Cowley had written back to Presbyterian headquarters from Kamiah on the Nez Perce reservation:

My wife with her three little ones can do but a tithe of the great work which must be done for her sisters here, if they would take an early place . . . among the more advanced of the Red Race.⁹

The struggle for mere subsistence on the rugged frontier did not leave much time for either husband or wife to devote to the propagation of the faith or the conversion of the Indians. Those few bachelors who had ventured alone to the mission fields either had immediately returned home to acquire wives or had never put down permanent enough roots to establish thriving mission centers. So now here was Sue, an experiment of the Presbyterian Church, a lone woman with the fewest possible personal and family responsibilities to distract her from the main objective of Christianizing these heathen Nez Percés. The Jesuit brothers, those worthy competitors in this race to win converts, were the best examples of what could be done by devout missionaries, unencumbered by family cares. Upon her frail shoulders Sue felt heavily the weight of her mission.

As soon as Sue became settled in her first Idaho home, she began in earnest to study the Nez Perce language, following the pattern of those teachers before her. Immediately she found herself in the midst of an active controversy. In the early days of the original Spalding mission at Lapwai, well over thirty years ago now, when Sue was still a little girl playing missionary lady on the banks of the Ohio River, there had been almost universal agreement that one of the first and most necessary requisites of all missionaries and teachers was to learn to speak the language of the natives. But in the intervening years since the Whitman Massacre there had grown up a strong sentiment that the American Indian with his great diversity of languages, destined to become a part of the white man's world, would have to adopt ultimately his language as well as his laws.¹⁰ This was certainly the philosophy taking over the government agency workers, in sharp contrast to that followed by the church workers. It is safe to conjecture that through that first winter in Lapwai the learning was mutual, the teacher gaining as much as her pupils.

Nearly all my leisure time through out the week since I came I have spent upon the Nez Perce language, for only through it could I reach the minds and hearts of the

natives, and I have learned to talk with them in it a little, and to read the gospel of Matthew to them.

"Through out the week" Sue's work was teaching Indian children in the government school with George Ainsley, but

Nearly ever since I came here I have given my Sabbaths out of church time to the Nez Perce women . . . I so longed to try to do them good.¹¹

As the fall advanced and the last brown leaves dropped from the cottonwoods and winter settled down over the small outpost of the reservation, Sue was learning much more than the rudiments of the Nez Perce language. There were two completely separate groups among the white settlers who came and went, or stayed about the agency. Most conspicuous were the ambitious immigrants, hardy cattlemen, struggling farmers, wanderlust miners, "bold highwaymen"¹² adventurers all — here to wrench their future out of this new country. More than ten years before when gold had been discovered in central Idaho, the first wanderers had slipped into Nez Perce territory. Soon rumors of the fabulous gold and silver strikes inundated the country with hordes of miners. Now that the exaggerated hopes had collapsed and the eastern panic and distress had cut off all outside help, there were desperate, hungry, and needy men encroaching upon all sections of the reservation. They were determined to secure their goals by any means, law or no law. These were the Godless men who had so disturbed her that first night in Idaho at the Lewiston hotel. These were the men who expected their rights to be upheld by the government agents, and during the early territorial days they had been generally successful. However, at the moment, they were actively indignant because President Grant had taken from them the much-coveted homeland of the Nez Percés, the Wallowa Valley.¹³

And then there was the second group of white people with whom Sue belonged: the missionaries, ministers, and teachers zealously devoted to the conversion of the Nez Percés to Presbyterianism and civilization.

"There can be no lasting civilization without religion."¹⁴

Before Sue had time to find out for herself, she was readily told by her co-workers that to accomplish their Christian mission

they must uphold the Indians' rights, must defend them from the selfish plundering of these free-booters, must protect and shield the Indians from the evil frontiersmen. In retaliation the adventurers labeled the church-sponsored workers fanatics. John Monteith's brother, Charles, during his ill-starred term as Nez Perce agent, reported to the Commission of Indian Affairs:

"An Indian reservation is no place for fanatics."¹⁵ As if internal disagreement among the few white people living on the reservation were not sufficiently disheartening, Sue discovered during that first winter at Lapwai that the members of the mission group itself were waging internecine warfare with each other. They were writing voluminous letters of attack and counter attack to anyone they considered influential. Hardly had she become settled before she learned that the venerable and revered Mr. Spalding was bitterly antagonistic toward George Ainsley, who had recommended Sue for the Lapwai work.

Sympathetic with each of the men in his personal dilemma, Sue was torn between them. Each one was a firm-minded individual, outspoken and fearless, tactless and direct, highly sensitive over his own importance and independence. Even had they been naturally congenial, the circumstances of their presence in Idaho on the same reservation could not have failed to make them enemies. After Agent John Monteith was convinced that Spalding's return to the Nez Perce in October, 1871, had been unwise, he had installed George Ainsley at Lapwai as Superintendent of Education. Not only had Ainsley displaced Spalding as superintendent but he had also been moved into Spalding's Lapwai house, while Spalding was absent in the fall of 1872 attending Presbytery in Oregon, where he had gone in high hopes of breaking Monteith's power. Spalding spent much of his energy of his last year battling the government which he identified with Agent Monteith and the Reverend Ainsley. This explained Spalding's residence at Kamiah, when Sue arrived a year later. Only two months before his death, in May, 1874, Sue wrote a tactful and sympathetic letter to the ailing but warring Mr. Spalding. Although she mentioned numerous mutual clerical acquaintances, she pointedly omitted any reference to either Agent John Monteith or to the Rev. George Ainsley, with whom she had been teaching the last nine months:

I did not know I was to be detained at Lapwai, until I reached here and was sorely disappointed. I had, all the time, looked forward to Kamiah as my home . . . and looked forward to hearing the story of the Nez Perces and their missions from the lips of those who had passed through the trying scenes of its early days. Long before my thoughts turned towards the Nez Perce Mission I had heard of them [Mr. and Mrs. Spalding], sometimes through Mr. Spalding's own pen, sometimes from notices of his work in the papers . . . I had hoped to see and know both him and his wife long ere this.¹⁶

With memories of past happy Christmas seasons Sue anticipated a respite in mind and heart from the bickerings, jealousies, and petty rivalries raging about her. But her hopes were short lived. In fact, far worse lay ahead. She had been told of the Nez Perce traditional two-week revival meetings coinciding with the Christmas-New Year holiday. This year about the middle of December, a leader of the non-treaty Indians from Montana, Pow-ka-tas, arrived and set up his tent about forty rods from the agency buildings. She heard several comments that he must be one of *those* "heathen long-hairs from the Crows." With his followers he gathered about him the malcontents among the Nez Perces and held

A regular war dance, kept up through the night accompanied by drumming and savage yells, which terrified our women and children and disturbed all our rest.¹⁷

Although this performance was some little distance up the creek, the howling wailing yells were clearly audible through the still frosty Lapwai air. Sue remained up much of the night, fully dressed, wrapped in blankets to keep warm. She sought to bolster her courage by reading her Bible, but it was a harrowing experience, particularly hard to bear on the anniversary of the Saviour's birth. After several days of these continuing demonstrations, Agent Monteith was finally able to subdue the revellers by appealing to Jacob, the head chief.

In reaction to this ungodly disturbance, the Christian Indians took counsel and planned a special New Year prayer meeting in a large lodge. This was the first opportunity Sue had had to

attend a Nez Perce religious gathering outside the church. She looked forward to it with keen interest and found it all that she had expected. But hardly had she returned to her little room when the reverend stillness was shattered by the repetition of the clamor of the recent weeks. Startled and alarmed by the contrast to the solemn piety she had left only a few minutes before, Sue fled to the Ainsleys. Maybe they could explain this new commotion. After all they had been at the Choctaw station, where the very worst of the Texan ruffians was nothing compared with this. They were the only people she could appeal to in her fright. She spent the night on the Ainsleys' couch, sleepless from the terror of the tom-toms and from Mrs. Ainsley's whining whispered forebodings to her husband in their near-by sleeping room.

The explanation via agency rumors was not long in coming the next morning. After the Nez Perce Christians and their white friends had departed in solemn spirituality, the non-treaties or pagan Nez Perces had moved into the long lodge. The staccato crescendoes of war-whoops and wild dancing replaced the emotional testimonials and the songs of Zion. That New Year's Day of 1874 was not one of resolutions; it was one devoutly spent in prayer for deliverance from this threat to their lives. Agent Monteith, making no secret of his alarm, sent immediately to the fort for a company of soldiers. When after the long day of watchful waiting, the soldiers arrived after dark to arrest Pow-katas and his trouble makers, the long lodge was empty and deserted; the culprits had all skipped quietly across the frozen Clearwater River and melted into the mountains beyond.

This inauspicious beginning of the New Year increased Sue's zeal to learn the Nez Perce language for she was now desperately aware how very much the welfare of the whole tribe depended upon the increasing influence of the Christian Nez Perces. During the early months of the new year, she learned the terms: "treaty" and "non-treaty" Indians. Exactly ten years before Sue's arrival in Idaho, in 1863, the former treaty made by Governor Stevens in 1855 had been renegotiated with the Nez Perces. Even the old Chief Joseph "who was always tenacious of 'Indian rights' had been satisfied with the terms of 1855.¹⁸ But not so with this modified 1863 treaty, by which the Nez Perces had lost vast

segments of their land including their beloved Wallowa. At that time "the break in the tribe" was made; those Indians, roughly the Christian element, who accepted the new terms and "stayed within the boundaries fixed" became the "treaty Indians." Those who objected strenuously to what they called a steal of their homelands, refused to recognize this new treaty of 1863, did not sign it, and became the "non-treaty Indians," aligned also with the non-Christian group.

As the seething temperature rose, so rose the tension of the whites about the agency. It was therefore no surprise one scorching day to see

In the summer of 1874, a delegation of citizens . . . from a hundred miles distant to Lapwai, to meet General Davis . . . The delegation alledged 'That the Indians, including the non-treaties, had assembled in large numbers . . . ostensibly for the purpose of digging roots, hunting, and fishing, and that they were talking very saucily to the settlers, and had committed various trespasses upon the farmers of the country.' . .

A large gathering of Indians was soon to take place about the fourth of July, at the Wee-ipe, situated east of Kamiah.¹⁹

Within hours the talked-about order came from Agent John Monteith: all personnel exclusive of the military was to leave Lapwai within twenty-four hours, to take only one valise which he was to carry himself. For the second time Sue "fled for her life" but with this difference: instead of being entirely alone she was herded about with other women. The ladies fortified themselves with big black umbrellas for protection from the boiling sun as they crowded into the agency hacks for the dust-laden trip to Lewiston. After a hot, sleepless night huddled in crowded hotel rooms in the terrified little town of Lewiston, the refugees were put on boats to go down the Snake River to Wallula and then overland again to Fort Walla Walla.

I have come through so much since last I wrote that I scarcely know where to begin. I remained at Walla Walla until troops were sent there from the fort to protect us and the settlers in Wallowa Valley. A part of the troops

were stationed about fifteen miles from here, where the non-treaties were assembled in force and we looked for a battle every day. But this was averted, by God's goodness, and the most of the non-treaties finally went off to the Buffalo country, east of the Rocky Mountains where I heard, this week, they were fighting their hereditary enemies, the Sioux. I do not know when they will return.

I overheard two Indian women wondering what 'Eagle from the Light' (the Chief of the non-treaty warriors) would do about Miss McBeth' here when he returned.

But Miss McBeth was in God's hands.²⁰

Sue had scarcely returned to her room in Lapwai late in July when she had unexpected company. It may well be that Sue's kind letter of May was partly instrumental in bringing the dying Spalding to the government house in Lapwai which she occupied. When Henry Harmon Spalding died on August 3, 1874, Sue was with Mrs. Spalding at his bedside. Although Sue was to refer to John Monteith as our "wise U.S. Indian Agent" at a later date, she had now aligned herself with the Spalding-Cowley faction. Living in the shadow of the Nez Perce Government Agency a whole year had brought her to the conviction that Agent John Monteith supported the powerful forces of the evil white exploiters. Sue was to grow more and more out of sympathy with government administrators in opposition to the philosophy of Indian exploitation which she came to believe they represented.

The Reverend H.T. Cowley, whom Spalding had recruited during his New York trip in 1871 for help in the Nez Perce work, had defended the older missionary and consequently suffered the opprobrium of Agent Monteith. Dismissed from Kamiah in October, 1873, about the time of Sue's arrival in Idaho, Cowley had been teaching this past year at Mt. Idaho. He was now leaving the reservation entirely and moving to Spokane, so with Father Spalding gone, Kamiah was completely devoid of any white teacher. This was Sue's opportunity — D.V. — she firmly believed Spalding's accounts that the Kamiahans were closer to God; she would carry on his work there. Neither John Monteith, who "was very disappointed in her work . . . a misfit grade

teacher,"²¹ although he, too, praised Sue's work subsequently to the Commissioner's Office in D.C. in his official reports, nor George Ainsley regretted losing Miss McBeth. As for Sue, she was elated to be leaving the agency two days' travel away.

... the happy vale of Kamiah. If you ask why happy? I shall be obliged to tell you that its happiness does not consist in being burned up one season and drowned out the next; that its people cannot be happy in planting, year after year, their vegetable gardens and seeing the grasshoppers eat the fruit thereof; that an advancing army of devastating crickets is not a happy sight; nor does it make for happiness to watch every sprig of green which stands of the small percentage of the trader's seeds which have come up, go down before the ever present cutworm. But Kamiah is happy — the happiest spot in all the Reservation, for the mountains lie between it and the Agency, a two days' journey to cross.

The Indians call the valley Kamiah, and they speak the word as if it were a well beloved name.²²

Even though Sue anticipated settling in "happy Kamiah," the actual moving was a dreaded ordeal. After the decision was made, there could be no delay because of the ominous approach of an early fall on the high Camas Prairie which had to be crossed to reach Kamiah. Her belongings seemed meagre until they were loaded into wagons for the two days' trip. Unlike most travelers because of her lameness, Sue was unable to walk to relieve the horses over the steepest grades, and therefore, a whole rig had to be allocated for her personal transportation. This alone burdened the mission's facilities.

The ascent was of the roughest and our loads heavy ... we turned a sharp corner and found ourselves hanging on the very verge of a precipice with a rocky cliff just before us.²⁵

After the rugged day's climb, the moving party stopped for the night on the edge of Craig's Mountain at Cold Spring Camp. Crawling up the face of the canyon leaving behind the burned-out summer at Lapwai, the travelers shivered in the sudden onslaught of the cool mountain air and Sue huddled in her

heaviest coat by the roaring campfire, while the Indians made camp. But from exhaustion that night she slept soundly in her own tent under a heavy old buffalo robe, awaking to the pre-dawn camp noises of woodchopping and rounding-up the hobbled horses. There was ice on the water bucket and frost had stiffened the tents. After a hurried breakfast around the spluttering campfire and the morning's devotions, the caravan was on its way toward the eastern edge of the prairie. By late afternoon they had reached the sheer descent to the Kamiah valley below, Sue's Promised Land.

We looked over the edge, and lo, lo! the vale of Kamiah lay at our feet. We saw the Clearwater River running like a silver line through the canon, narrowing here and broadening there and the shadows of the swiftly moving clouds giving the whole valley a strange weird coloring ... And thus we entered Kamiah. The clouds rolled away and the blue sky was reflected in the Clearwater. The valley lay like a haven of rest and peace, lovely in the rain washed atmosphere but so very silent.²⁴

Stiff from the journey's jolting, Sue was thankful to find herself at long last located where she had expected to be more than a year ago. Here she was to have a whole house to herself,²⁵ Spalding's mournfully silent "rough, unfinished board box" of three little bare rooms with a pantry and a woodshed.²⁶ Again Sue busied herself rearranging her possessions. With this extra roominess she was glad to include those items left by Mrs. Spalding in appreciation of Sue's hospitality and sympathetic help during her husband's last illness: a bumpy lounge of sorts and another chair or two. Sue made immediate plans to have her melodeon organ sent. Always Sue had resented and avoided whenever she could the necessary time needed for housekeeping chores. Brought up largely by her father, for most of his married life and all of her own childhood, Alexander's eldest child, Sue had been his "substitute son." She had found it easy to leave her younger sister Kate helping their mother at home while she busied herself with outdoor chores and her own omniverous reading and study. In a letter to the Rev. J.C. Lowrie a few years later Sue was to write that Kate had always been more domestic than she was.²⁷

Now more than ever facing the task of taking over Father Spalding's school, she was determined to be free from those mundane household details. Her dragging foot not only tired her excessively but was a real hindrance in such activities. But in no way did her infirmity interfere with her brilliant mind as she improvised methods to meet this exciting challenge of a school room of Nez Perce Indians. Welcoming any help about her cabin, Sue was delighted to find that she could share with some of the government employees a Chinaman to bake her bread and do the laundry. She was dismayed to discover that her sole source of water was a spring some quarter-of-a-mile distant until she learned that an aged Indian woman who had helped the Spaldings expected to continue serving the new missionary lady. To this chore Sue was relieved to add the chores of running errands and of cleaning the cabin occasionally.

Accustomed as she had become to the agency neighbors in Lapwai, this "stillness place"²⁸ seemed to Sue far removed from her nearest neighbor, the government blacksmith's family. Because she felt alone, fearful from the recent summer Indian scare, and deserted among an alien strange people she had a triangle hung in the window next them so that anything should happen in the night, I might try to make them hear me."²⁹

With the venerable Father Spalding gone, the long lonely weeks and years stretched ahead. But Sue was not really alone for from the clear cold Kamiah skies she knew her God was watching and was very near as he had been in those other crises of her life: the shock of her father's death, the Choctaw conflict, those ghastly nights in the Jefferson Barracks hospital among dying men, and then the time she had been flung to the floor as dead by the message of a telegram.

But now here she was in far-away Idaho starting a new life, facing her first regular class of students, bequeathed to her by Spalding's death and Cowley's departure for Spokane. There were five Nez Perces: James Hines, Archie Lawyer, James Lawyer, Mark Williams, and Robert Williams. Immediately Sue took up where Spalding had left off, teaching and redeeming this lost and wandering people. She was unaware that her terminology "Boys" unconsciously reflected the Oklahoma

influence of southern white superiority from which she had fled in terror. So to her these grown Nez Perce men, several of them with flourishing families of their own, became her "Boys" and in time she became to them their "little white mother."

James Hines, the oldest, had vivid boyhood memories of the ill-fated Asa Smith's brief sojourn in the Kamiah Valley thirty-five years before. The beleaguered Mr. Smith, struggling to maintain an invalid whimpering wife, had enlisted a youthful James as a helper in his garden. A horse was magic to James and he delighted to "ride one of the unwise ponies to guide the plow for Rev. Smith." He also helped occasionally to care for the Smith cow, but this was no joy comparable to his delight with the horse. As he related these experiences to Sue, his eyes still shone with his excitement and enthusiasm for horses which had never left him. Sue had sadly to admit to herself that probably she would never succeed in bringing that sparkle to his eyes from mere learning; this would be a challenge to her Scotch stubbornness. More recently when the Reverend H.T. Cowley came to Kamiah in 1871 to help the aged Spalding, James Hines as well as Robert Williams and Archie Lawyer had been there to greet them.³⁰

Those Lawyer "Boys" — Jimmy and Archie — were sons of the respected and loyal Chief Lawyer. From the beginning they made Sue uncomfortable. She had had some anxious moments speculating how the men entrusted to her guidance might react to the transition from the Reverend Spalding to an unknown woman. The Lawyers' attitude soon confirmed her worst trepidations. She purposely dressed in plain clothing and cultivated an appearance of sobriety and restraint as their new teacher. She had even as a young girl living the outdoor and intellectual life of her father been a "man's woman." The fluffy femininity of contemporary Victorian girls was not hers, and she dressed accordingly:

Dress plainly. This is important. Even the rich worlding will almost unconsciously have more respect for the words of one who dresses like a follower of the meek and lowly Jesus . . . Rich, gay clothing will seem to mock the poverty of the poor.³¹

With her straight dark hair parted precisely in the middle and pulled back severely from her serious face, her features could

easily have been mistaken for those of a man. The high starched white collar showing slightly above a navy or black suit jacket was devoid of lace or ruffle. At her neck a plain bow resembled those worn by men. Touching the top of her high buttoned shoes her dark skirt covered any trace of feminine allure.

But none of this careful facade deceived either of the Lawyers. From her very first encounter with them, Sue was made aware of her womanhood and that they, the sons of the chief, were not accustomed to directions from a woman. Their sharp intelligent questions were disturbing and penetrating and pushed her to the limit, sometimes dangerously near the edge of her patience. She immediately recognized their superior native intelligence and was sure that their questions were designed more to catch her in theological quagmires than from any sincere desire to know The Truth. Both Lawyers were eager students of all possible church laws and regulations. Frequently Sue ruefully reflected that they were well named — the Lawyers. Their silent exchange of glances after every sharp argument never failed to shake her composure — Sue hoped not visibly, but she could not ignore her inner turmoil. How could she ever bring these two gifted “Boys” to become true Christians, faithful followers of the church which she was here to lead? Lacking any levity herself or any appreciation of humor in others, Sue could not appreciate the sly furtive Lawyer by-play that frequently engulfed the other three students. Still fumbling with the Nez Perce language, she was unable to establish any camaraderie, fearing the occasional outbreaks of mirth was at her expense. She knew that Archie had caused serious trouble for poor ailing Mr. Spalding that last year of his life in Kamiah, but she also recognized that the whites held the Lawyer family as one of their chief bulwarks of safety in the Nez Perce tribe. Their loyalty to the Christian-treaty group had gained for them the bitter enmity of the non-treaty Nez Perce and gave them the courage of leadership in the Kamiah Church, where they claimed their father was the first and leading ordained deacon.

If the Lawyers bothered Sue, the two Williams brothers were her joy. With no pretensions to chieftanship, humble and grateful for every attention, Robert and Mark were docile and agreeable to her slightest suggestion. She was the teacher, she

knew and they were content with whatever she taught. Their father, Jonathan, "Uncle Billy," was another deacon ordained at the same time as Chief Lawyer by Spalding. But in contrast to Chief Lawyer he had no tradition of leadership, "not a drop of royal blood" in his veins.³² Robert and Mark's father had never learned to read and was content as deacon to act as janitor and as Sabbath School teacher, echoing the lesson stories he listened to the week before. Especially Robert, the older of the two "Boys," was conservative, serious, anxious to be proper, to know the right thing. Unlike Archie's difficulties with Mr. Spalding, Robert had been a trusted friend of all the white ministers of his acquaintance. The Reverend Cowley had appealed to him for help from the isolation of Mt. Idaho:

Please tell Robert we would like some more flour, two sacks, not the *graham* this time . . . from his best wheat . . . he will have to trust us for two or three weeks. We have had nothing from the Board yet.³³

To insure that he and Lucy were properly man and wife, Robert had insisted that Mr. Cowley marry them, May 3, 1874.

Thus Sue found herself drawing upon every scrap of the Nez Perce language she had so assiduously studied the past year in Lapwai. But her own frail human abilities were not enough; never did she question God's direction of every event of her classroom.

First, and most important: Go to your work directly from your knees. Do not leave your closet until you feel that God is with you, by His Spirit.

Go directly to your work. Do not dissipate your thoughts and feelings by shopping or calls, or business or pleasure.

It is wise not to start with any preconceived ideas of what you shall do or say . . . Do not be too familiar. Familiarity breeds contempt and lessens your influence.³⁴

As soon as preparations were complete for the cold months ahead and the winter of 1874 settled down on the Kamiah Valley, the five pupils were free from other duties and could devote themselves seriously to their studies. The six days of the week were divided equally, three were given to the exclusive study of

the Bible, the remaining three to secular subjects, such as geography, drawing, arithmetic, music. As Kate recorded in her journal, Sue "worked in no haphazard way — she always had a plan to work up to!"³⁵

Never willing "to hear children parrot-like-repeating words they did not understand"³⁶ Sue continued Spalding's lead in translating more portions of the Bible and some more familiar hymns. Sue and her "Boys" studied enthusiastically all winter until the spring planting season necessitated a respite for students and teacher. During the strenuous school year it occurred repeatedly to Sue that she was carrying all alone the load of a trained clergyman and that at only a fraction of his salary. Obviously the board in Philadelphia was saving a tidy sum from her pittance of an annual salary of \$650. Doubtless Sue's "equal pay for equal work" theory may have been influenced by her knowledge that the spring before in Lapwai the Reverend Ainsley had applied for a double salary, one for his wife as well as for himself. She may not have known that his request had been preemptorily rejected.³⁷ But undoubtedly she must have realized that practically everyone else working on the Reservation had much more salary.³⁸

She was successfully carrying on single-handedly Spalding's school; without a divinity degree she was establishing a "real Presbyterian Theological Seminary of the Northwest."³⁹ Lacking the title, the salary, and the prestige but securing the results of a clergyman, Sue was human enough to covet the status. During the spring recess from daily classes with more time to write letters she appealed to Dr. J.C. Lowrie, secretary of the Board in Philadelphia, April 3, 1875:

The proposition is this: I wonder if Dr. Lowrie — or the Board — or whoever decides such matters — could — for an hour — and for the present purpose, only write in their thoughts — 'Rev.' before S.L. McBeth's name instead of 'Miss'?⁴⁰

Along with this request Sue also launched a series of letters pleading for a printing press. Spalding had become well known for his Nez Perce work through his press which now was in Oregon. Since Sue was carrying on Spalding's teaching, she insisted that she too needed a printing press. Well aware of the

financial stringencies back in the eastern office, she pointed out that the board was saving enough from her woman's-scaled salary to purchase the press.

That day of April, 1875, must have been predestined for letter writing, for Sue's correspondent in Philadelphia was busy writing messages that affected her. She could not have known that Dr. Lowrie was already suspicious about her "Rev." yearnings, that their letters would cross in the slow mail. Lowrie inquired pointedly of Sue how she had managed to conduct a communion service when to his certain knowledge there was no minister present then in Kamiah. He exhorted Sue to remember that she was on the government pay roll as a school teacher first, and that her religious work was to come only after she had fulfilled her responsibilities as a government teacher.

On this same fatal day, Dr. Lowrie also wrote to John Monteith as the official responsible for the Nez Perce reservation, asking him for information about Sue's work. Does she have only four scholars? Is she doing the real work required of government appointees?

She had expected more sympathetic understanding from John Cameron Lowrie because he was the nephew of her former pastor in Wellsville, John Marshall Lowrie. She felt he was almost a member of the family; these old ties made his rebuff doubly bitter. Already suspicious of Sue's clerical leanings, Lowrie ignored her "proposition" in his reply the following month, May 22. However, he took notice of her printing press request by brushing it off with the remark that surely with such a few scholars a small printing press costing only \$20 to \$50 would be sufficient. Through all the remaining years of her life Sue never ceased to plead for a printing press; this "one idea'd woman"⁴¹ never stopped asking; four years later in August (1879) she is begging again for the press she never received. It is ironic that six years after her death, generous, wealthy friends from Chicago sent "two boxes containing Press, type, hymn books, and sign print cards . . . just everything" to Sister Kate, who had never expressed such a desire.⁴²

If Philadelphia could ignore requests and hints, so could Idaho. There is no evidence that Sue ever acknowledged or replied to Dr. Lowrie's implied criticism of her too few

"scholars." But she may have been thinking of this occasion when she wrote years later to a friend:

. . . the object is not number but men. One carefully selected, and thoroughly trained teacher and leader is more profitable she [McBeth] thinks than if the same time and strength were "scattered" over half a dozen.⁴³

Many times Sue repeated this theory of hers, the worth of the individual. About Robert Williams she wrote:

. . . she [Sue McBeth] counts him [Robert Williams] ample reward for her twelve years of isolation, and toil and burden bearing among the Nez Perce — even if he stood alone. And she [McBeth] can say the same thing of James Hayes, who is Robert's 'Son in the Lord' (as is Robert Parsons to James Hayes).⁴⁴

Besides the aid a press could have been to Sue's daily teaching, there was the matter of her dictionary. On the long, hot dusty ride her first day in Idaho with the Reverend W.J. Monteith, he had told Sue of his interest in collecting a glossary of some one hundred Nez Perce words. Acute as Sue's interest had always been in languages, for she was an exceptional Latin and Greek scholar educated under the late Dr. Charles Bettie of Steubenville, her mind took fire from the old man's talk. He was delighted to find an answering spark from the glow of this intense little woman bouncing along beside him. He promised to pass on to her the help he had received from the best white translator he knew of the Nez Perce tongue, Perrin Whitman. In her naivete of those early hours on the reservation, Sue had not heard of the intense rivalry existing between the Rev. Spalding and Perrin Whitman; at that time any authoritative help was welcome to her.

Within two months, December 2, Sue was writing to Dr. Lowrie that her ambition was now to enlarge the Rev. Monteith's glossary to a dictionary that should be printed some day. It would be a valuable contribution not only to the Nez Perce tribe but also to the whole realm of scholarly studies.

The hurried exodus from Lapwai under the threat of Indian trouble to Fort Walla Walla and then the permanent move of her living quarters to Kamiah immediately in the fall with its

attendant adjustments and greater responsibilities in teaching her "Boys" limited her time severely. Necessarily the dictionary had to wait on the shelf until the seed-time spring recess when she could add again to its content from her own growing vocabulary.

Sue found in her dictionary relaxation and relief. It became an all-absorbing interest that carried her over many rough spots and the reoccurring crises that Sue seemed to find around many corners. Here in a scholarly approach to the Nez Perce people she could find surcease from daily frustrations and concerns. Sue came to believe that her efforts on the dictionary might have an enduring value in the scholarly world comparable to the eternal souls she labored to convert in the spiritual world. Losing herself in syntax and grammar, Sue inquired, kept notes and labored in her little rough cabin many a night by a spluttering lamp. It was her Shangri-La.

During those weeks of freedom from class room routine, which began in the hot summer months at 6 a.m., Sue heard often from her white neighbors ominous forebodings of Indian trouble again this year. The Indian Office in Washington, D.C., had reversed itself once more. For the last two years, since June, 1873, the administration had resisted the fury of the aroused white settlers who had been banned from the Wallawa-Imnaha territory, the heart of the Nez Perce tribe. Now two years later, June, 1875, the political pressure was too much for the national administration, and the Indians were for the second time pushed out of that most precious portion of their inheritance.⁴⁵

Once to Sue Kamiah had seemed safe and far-away from Wallowa. But by now she knew enough of the Nez Perce language and of their hearts to understand the tenacity of devotion the Nez Percés held for that portion of their tribal lands south of the Snake. She was more alarmed by the ominous silence of Nez Perce friends than by the blustering fear of the white people she knew. As she had two years ago written home, she was convinced that "Miss McBeth was in God's hands," but nevertheless she always meant to give God every possible help in saving herself. She would not let herself be stampeded into fright as she had in Oklahoma even though

last night and tonight the drum is beating and they are

uttering their peculiar cries of worship or revelry in a tent near us.⁴⁶

The boiling summer of 1875 in Kamiah simmered toward another August. Just a year ago Spalding had died, and Sue had arrived from Lapwai to this new life of independent responsibility. Now she prepared to put away her dictionary work for another season of teaching because the Nez Perces were home again from the camas grounds and settling down around her cottage for another session of instruction.

Immersed in her teaching, Sue was startled back to the world she had left by the shocking news of the sudden and tragic death of William Chapman Ralston, her life-long friend. Growing up together in Wellsville, he had been just enough older than Sue, four years, to be always an aloof challenge, beyond her immediate circle of influence. Sue had never been unaware of his forceful, impetuous, and dominating presence; the home town boy who had made good in a big way. She doubted his spiritual consecration; in fact, she was sure he wasn't saved, and yet she had never doubted his basic integrity. The reports related all the painful details of the "horrible accident" that took his life and the collapse of his fabulous fortune, this "first citizen of California . . . the foremost genius of this Western empire."⁴⁷

Sue's heart ached for the brother to whom she wrote, remembering with gratitude that April evening so long ago in Wellsville when "the younger Ralston" had come uninvited to share the grief of her first great bereavement. She included one of her poems composed for this special occasion and signed: "Sister Sue."

As 1876 approached, the Nez Perces were on the brink of tremendous changes. On January 3, 1876, Chief Lawyer died. It was he who had signed the ill-fated 1863 treaty with the white man, forfeiting the Nez Perce rights to Wallowa, for which the non-treaties never forgave him or his descendants. He had devoted his life to promoting understanding and a spirit of compromise between his beleaguered people and the pushing white settlers. Now that his restraining influence was gone, the younger men, among them his volatile and brilliant sons, Sue's most challenging and troublesome "Boys," James and Archie, were not to be held in abeyance. They were for action. White

civilization with its many blessings and problems was crowding in on the reservation.⁴⁸

At the Centennial Fourth before a mixture of treaty and non-treaty Indians, James Lawyer was the featured orator, who from the earliest mention was said to have "especially . . . excellent gifts as a speaker." After careful coaching by his teacher, he gave the history of the day and concluded with his own innovation that his listeners standing in a circle about him

wave their hats three times for the Fourth of July!

Hurrah! fourth of July!"⁴⁹

On this same Centennial Fourth Sue was instrumental in organizing the first temperance society in northern Idaho. Throughout her life Sue was consistently zealous in her battle against Demon Rum, typical of her generation. The earliest treaty of 1855 made with the Nez Perces by Governor Stevens had stipulated that no liquor be brought upon the reservation. This was the generally accepted government policy on all its Indian lands. The hard-headed administrator, John Monteith, wrote the authorities in Washington, D.C., that much of his trouble stemmed from "all the roughs and whiskey men in this part of the country."⁵⁰ Among them he named Joe Craig and Tom Newell, who had brought liquor on the reservation to bootleg it to the Indians.⁵¹ Not only was Sue following governmental official policy regarding liquor and Indians, but she had herself become convinced by her Oklahoma experience that "God will curse the white man for giving guns and liquor to the Indians."⁵²

In November, General Howard and his staff had arrived at Lapwai for a council, which was held in the church. Here even the wordly eyes of the social ladies of the army post noted the difference between Sue's "Boys" and the "wild ones":

Joseph's band had arrived and were all in one side of the church, most of them sitting on the floor, horrible, dirty looking things all rolled up in blankets and robes. On the other side of the building were a lot of Treaty Indians who came in to hear how their wild brothers were treated. You noticed at once a difference in the appearance of the two parties. The Treaty Indians nearly all wore shirts, pants, and coats or jackets. Only here and

there was there an old fellow in a blanket among them. They nearly all had their hair short, that is short for Indians, cut off about their necks Very few of them were painted too.

But the other people were very Indian looking, indeed. Such ferocious looking headdresses you never saw. They took their head fixings off when their heads got tired holding them. One old fellow, sitting on the floor, had an enormous fur of some sort gotten up into a headdress. It looked like a whole beaver skin. By and by, he took this thing off and began scratching or rubbing his head, which was not braided as they usually do it, but the long hair was all hanging around and was evidently powdered white with flour. He rubbed so hard, the flour looked like a cloud of smoke around his head. Some two or three of them had all the front hair cut off but about six or eight inches, which they combed straight up and stiffened with something so it stood straight up from their heads like a comb, and the long, black hair was hanging down their backs in a braid with some kind of a ornament at the end. Some of them had all their hair stiffened, and it stood out all around their heads."

It does not appear that it ever occurred to these army ladies that the "savages" might possess a sense of humor like other human beings. In apparent seriousness this observer goes on to relate that near them

one old fellow, not of Joseph's band, sat down (rolled in his blanket) on the floor. He seemed very much amused by a little black dotted veil Mrs. Perry had over her face. By and by, he took off his headgear, which was stupendous and was made out of a whole collection of things, and took out of it an old black cotton net which he fixed over his face, like Mrs. Perry's veil, and then nodded to us, as much as to ask us what we thought of it. He evidently was pleased with its effect, for he wore it nearly all afternoon."

As for their "sisters," the squaws

were all gathered around outside in their best, brightest clothes, with lots of babies on the mothers' backs. They

wore such bright colors — yellow skirts and blue scarfs, red dresses with green aprons, and all sorts of combinations. Some of them had very handsome robes. I saw one squaw with a robe tanned almost as white as muslin (they always wear them with the fur turned in) with a band of heavy, bright bead work, six or eight inches wide, all around it . . .

The Indian smell was awful . . .

General Howard had a little service in the Infantry Barracks Sunday night — nothing more than a little temperance talk to the men — but the whole thing was very pleasant."

The Indian Commissioners departed on Wednesday without Joseph coming to any terms." (November 19, 1876)⁵³

Thus 1876 came to a close in an atmosphere of suspense, indecision, and anxiety all over the reservation. It had been significant for the changing fortunes, leadership, and outlook of the Nez Perces. Although Spalding had ordained three deacons, "virtually elders — in the Kamiah Church, before he died," the first elders in Lapwai were not ordained until this year.⁵⁴ Almost exactly two years after Father Spalding's death, the Reverend W.J. Monteith had died in August, 1876. Summarizing the Presbyterian mission field of the year, the *MISSIONARY WORLD* stated that there were in the Nez Perce tribe two missionaries [Sue and the Reverend Warren Norton] and six hundred forty communicants. At last Sue felt her mission was firmly planted and that its future usefulness was assured.

With both the older men gone, Spalding and Monteith, Sue realized that she was now heir to two sacred trusts from them: the Kamiah school and the Nez Perce dictionary. If both of these projects were to continue, were to survive the hurly-burly of reservation life, it was up to Sue. God had so led her that she was sure she could hear the echo in her heart "Who knoweth whether Thou art not come to the Kingdom for such a time as this?"

CHAPTER 2

FLEE FOR MY LIFE

When Sue reflected upon the new year of 1877, she mused with satisfaction upon her life in Kamiah, upon the two-week Christmas revival she had helped make possible for Indians, old and young, gathered there in the warm, friendly Kamiah church. There had been some ripples of trouble with Agent John Monteith at Lapwai, who had showed concern about the small enrollment of her school. Himself a Presbyterian and his late respected father a leader in the church, Agent Monteith had voiced misgivings about the predominance of theology in Sue's teaching. Even her Presbyterian directors in Philadelphia, Dr. Lowrie and Dr. Ellinwood, had raised embarrassing criticism about the brevity and infrequency of her letters and especially about the vagueness in her quarterly reports. Sue detested these reports which were required by the government, but if the Presbyterian Board of Philadelphia wanted letters, that was no problem. No, indeed, next to the hours devoted to her beloved dictionary, writing letters was a major delight and relaxation. As Sue considered the past four years, particularly the scope of her teaching since she had come to Kamiah three years ago to carry on the work of the pioneer Spalding, she knew she had found her life's mission.

Far from Lapwai there was little direct interference from the agency. Crippled by emotional shock and slightly paralyzed by the following stroke, with the Panic of '73 closing many schools, she had come west having no other place to go. It had been hard; the rigor and ugliness of living arrangements were worse than she had dreamed could exist. But after these last three years in Kamiah came a surge of thanksgiving, for Sue could see this was the work God had chosen for her. She felt assured that her sacrifices were difficult enough to merit eternal salvation. Among this alien people she now was at home; having at last

mastered their foreign tongue, she loved the musical cadences of the Nez Perce speech. There had been only one brief interruption, that disturbance at Weippe three years ago when she fled to Walla Walla, but it was shortly over, and she had returned almost at once to her teaching. She had no doubt now that she was really God's emissary at this outpost of civilization.

The Nez Percés were divided into numerous bands and groups. Those at Kamiah were for the most part Christians. Following the pattern laid down by Spalding, many of the Kamiah Indians cultivated flourishing gardens in their fertile little valley hemmed in by mountains and nourished by the shining Clearwater River. Robert Williams' father, Jonathan, called by the whites Uncle Billy, was the entrepreneur of those earliest market gardeners. It was said that he had gained his title because he "often said in talking, 'Much business me Billy'." A shrewd bargainer, he demanded payment in gold dust from the miners, starved for his green produce. It was also rumored that after first being rejected by Dorcas, this "small man, quick in his step, brisk in all his movements and . . . genial in manner" was able to change his sweetheart's mind by the proof of his gardening prowess. He had established the first orchard at Kamiah and had helped Felix Corbett set his out later.¹ This was their world and they intended to keep it, in peace with their white neighbors. Sue having witnessed at first hand the useless brutality of war between the states, instilled in her "Boys" a deep-seated hatred of war. War was murder and murder was against God's ordinances. Above all they must never take up arms against their own brothers, Indians or whites, Christian brothers of one God. Symbolic of their Christianity, by now nearly all of the Kamians had exchanged the blanket for frock coats and trimmed their long hair. The wives had forsaken their native sack-like knee length loose coverings for the long-sleeved flowing dresses, proper and uncomfortable styles of the Victorian era.

At last Sue was living the dream of her girlhood; she was a genuine Indian queen. Always wishing her teaching to be for the select and favored few, she justified her school of six or seven "Boys" as a training center for special Indian evangelists. They were to be the leaven to bring civilized customs and the true

worship of God to the heathen of the Northwest. For this work Sue was eminently qualified. She did not even need to leave her small cottage, for the "Boys" came to her own sitting room for study with "the little mother." She found willing hands to gather, chop, store her firewood, as well as to care for other household chores, and except for Sabbath church attendance, she seldom appeared publicly among the Nez Perces, as walking was becoming more and more difficult.

As 1877 approached, Sue did not write as many letters as she had resolved. But she spent a good deal of time and much thought upon the article that appeared in the January, 1877, issue of PRESBYTERIAN BANNER. This would reach many readers among whom Sue could hope to recruit new supporters for this great work. As an introduction she reviewed the past labors of two of her predecessors, Spalding and W.J. Monteith, stating that the tribe numbered about 2,800. She explained the division of the Nez Perces into treaty and non-treaty Indians. According to Sue, the treaty party was adjusting well to civilized life and to Presbyterianism. Following Spalding's lead in criticizing the Catholics, she concluded the article:

The Jesuits have gained a foothold, through the influence of friends in Washington, and are as usual busy at work — since the death of Rev. Mr. Monteith, [W.J., August 19, 1876] there is not now left one white minister of our denomination to labor among the Nez Perces.

It was this last statement that prompted Dr. Lowrie to write to Agent Monteith: "When this is read in Washington, I fear the government will no longer pay Miss McBeth's salary." Within weeks his prophecy came true when the Presbyterian Board of Foreign Missions had to assume the total responsibility for Sue's support.

In February of 1877, Agent Monteith wrote his subagent, Mr. R.M. Redfield in Kamiah to keep a "good look out" for the doings in the neighborhood of the non-treaties, who had been ordered by General Howard to come on the reservation for permanent settlement. During the next two months anxiety continued to ruffle the quiet Kamiah valley. Members of Joseph's band came and went seeking to enlist recruits for the restoration of the Wallowa Valley to the tribal lands. The issue

was not strictly a Kamiahan affair because the Kamiah Nez Perces did not as ardently regard Wallowa their home base as did the followers of Joseph. The non-treaties for the most part more pagan than Christian, enlisted only a comparatively few malcontents from Kamiah. The very lack of enthusiastic support for his cause increased Joseph's enmity toward the Christian Nez Perces and engendered great uneasiness in the whole Kamiah Valley.

A comparatively wild winter throughout the Nez Perce country brought a welcome early spring. Transplanted Easterners wrote home in early March:

It has been so much like spring . . . the prairie is yellow with buttercups . . . thousands of them.

Seven kinds of wild flowers have been blooming all around us . . . the most fragrant . . . I ever knew . . . The children live out of doors . . . sunburnt and freckled.

In May, General Howard was attempting to hold talks with the Nez Perce leaders at the fort in Lapwai. Writing home to her mother in Ohio, an army doctor's wife told of the events there:

There is a big tent pitched on the parade ground . . . and in and around it, squatted on the ground, are about a hundred Indians in the most gorgeous get-ups you can imagine . . . The outside line of Indians around the tent consists almost entirely of squaws and papooses . . . and the smell is strongly Indian.

I suppose the talk will continue for two or three days. We feel just a little afraid, just enough to keep it interesting . . . No one really expects anything horrible, but I felt very glad of the precautions the General saw fit to take . . . the guards were doubled this morning and both companies are armed in their quarters.

The proceedings before this Council were weird and queer . . . the Indians rode out from the Canyon in single file. All were on ponies and in their gorgeous array and instead of turning into the post gates, they circled the post three times, cupping their mouths with their hands, making the sound of Wah-Wah-Wah. When they finally

stopped at the gate, they stacked their arms before entering the post. At one time . . . one young brave got very excited in his gestures. As he raised his arm in emphasis, a long, sharp knife fell on the ground. (May 4, 1877)

The next day, she continues:

The Indian Council has not had the result we expected . . . We can all see that General Howard is very anxious . . . is very careful . . . I am continually wondering why no one (but Mrs. Perry) seems excited . . . we fuss over our dinners and clothes, etc., as if it was the most usual thing in the world to have troubles with the Indians . . . General Howard is promenading the porch quoting scriptures. Indeed, I think he is real good, but is awfully queer about it.²

Her little four-year-old daughter apparently agreed with her mother's verdict of "awfully queer" and was impressed by General Howard's "over-weening piety"³ as recent historians have labeled his religious zeal. As an old lady, she remembered:

One of my early recollections is watching with awe General Howard marching up and down the porch which ran the width of the two houses. I remember the light falling through the hop vines covering the porch and General Howard, his empty sleeve tucked in his blouse . . . quoting verse after verse of scripture.

As the month of May wore on, spirits rose and fell in Lapwai with each day's events:

We feel much more comfortable about the Indians. Joseph seems inclined to come in now . . . Ollicut . . . has always given more trouble than Joseph . . . who is a splendid looking Indian . . . Joseph has his camp about half a mile from here, and he comes down every few days and shakes hands all around . . . We have been quite gay at Lapwai for the last three weeks with our Indians and our strange officers at the post . . .⁴ (May 11)

While the center of tension was concentrated at Lapwai sixty miles away, every traveler brought new rumors to Kamiah. Then there appeared some forty non-treaties who camped about three miles from Kamiah up the river on the home grounds of

"Sel-we-kas." Most ominously there were no squaws with them, but

mostly young men, dressed in the customary shirt, blanket and moccasins, their faces painted, and feathers in their hair.⁵

For approximately a week tension and fear gripped the handful of Kamiah whites. Obviously to even the most trusting, these non-treaties were up to no good with their long night sessions of throbbing tom-toms accompanying their drunken harangues. Many times each day and almost continuously throughout the wakeful night, Sue pled with God for protection.

To her, General Howard's unexpected arrival was a direct answer to prayer. The noisy and worrisome non-treaties picked up their camp in the dark and departed as suddenly as they had appeared. Again Kamiah was peaceful, and Sue once more could sleep all night, waking the next morning refreshed and reassured that God was watching from the clear Kamiah skies.

General Oliver Otis Howard was exactly Sue's age. Of New England parentage, he was graduated from Bowdoin College before he attended West Point. Because he saw eye to eye with the McBeths' religious beliefs, to Sue he was much more than the noted military personage who had fought valiantly at Gettysburg and had accompanied General Sherman on the march to the sea. He vehemently shared his superior officer's opinion that "war is hell," and during his visit with Sue the two quickly discovered the similarity of their views and their experiences. As General Howard had lost his right arm in the Civil War engagements at Fair Oaks, so too had Sue become a cripple, physically and emotionally, because of the same cruel war. When she was still working in St. Louis with the U.S. Christian Commission, she had read the tribute he wrote at the conclusion of the war praising that organization. As a Major-General in charge of the Bureau of Refugees, Freedmen, and Abandoned Lands, O.O. Howard had been promoted to general when President Johnson had followed the martyred Lincoln's appointment of Howard as Commissioner of the Freedmen's Bureau in the capital.⁶ Not long before leaving Ohio, Sue had heard more about Howard in the popular postwar book, *THE FLAG AND THE CROSS*, by A.E. Billingsley. Here she found the general selected as one of eight

men listed in the chapter on "Distinguished Christian Men in the War" and had been thrilled to read that he believed essentially as she did in the same

doctrines of the Bible and Puritanic orthodoxy . . . with the law of the Lord written upon his heart, he lives it out in his life.⁷

This was the man who took time from his heavy responsibilities as commander of this "Geographical Department" to look her up in her shabby poor cottage along the Clearwater to discuss her "Boys." This man of education, experience, honorary degrees, and renown was noticeably impressed with

the Christian friendly Nez Perces, comprising two-thirds and more of these Indians . . . [who] remained contentedly on their reservation."

He too recognized John B. Monteith as a conscientious public servant who despite his poor health

had been unsparing of himself in his journeys over his reservation, and beyond, sometimes having ridden his horse . . . for sixty or seventy miles in a day . . . [and] was very kind and conciliatory toward them [Nez Perces].

The one conviction that Sue and General Howard shared most deeply was the injustices the Indians had suffered at the hands of their white masters:

First, we acknowledge and confirm by treaty to Indians a sort of title to vast regions. Afterwards, we continue, in a strictly legal manner, to do away with both the substance and the shadow of title. Wiser heads than Joseph's have been puzzled by this manner of balancing the scales.⁸

If Sue was comforted by the general's visit, he likewise left Kamiah encouraged by the spirit he found there among the Nez Perces. In late May, less than a month before violence broke out, he was writing home:

In a small house, of two or three rooms, I found Miss McBeth living by herself. She is such a invalid from a partial paralysis that she cannot walk from house to house so I was sure to find her at home. The candle gave us a dim light, so that I could scarcely make out how she looked as she gave me her hand and welcomed me to

Kamiah. The next time I saw her was by day showed me a pale, intellectual face above a slight frame. How could that face and frame seek this far-off region? Little by little the mystery is solved. Her soul has been fully consecrated to Christ, and He, as she fully believes, sent her upon a special mission to the Indians . . .

For as Jonah the sub chief here says, 'It makes Indians stop buying and selling wives; stop gambling and horse racing for money; stop getting drunk and running about; stop 'all time lazy' and make 'em 'all time work.' It [her work] is filling this charming little village with houses, and though she cannot visit them, her pupils' houses are becoming neat and cleanly. The wife is becoming industrious within doors, sews, knits and cooks. The fences are up, the fields are planted. Oh, that men could see that this faithful Christian teaching has the speedy effect to change the heart of the individual man! then all the fruits of civilization immediately begin to follow. May God bless and help this faithful servant, Miss McBeth.⁹

Not long after General Howard's visit, the whole reservation exploded into the Joseph War. Settlers to the south and east of the Camas Prairie were brutally murdered. Cottonwood, Grangeville, and Mt. Idaho were under siege. Although Chief Joseph had attempted to avoid the outbreak, and had his plans all laid to move on to the reservation, he found himself entangled by many cross-currents of intrigue, and finally pushed over the brink of hostilities by young, impatient, hot-tempered, members of the non-treaties.

James Lawyer, one of Sue's "Boys," was the first to bring the news to Kamiah. On the morning of the 14th of June, 1877, he came to Mr. Redfield, telling him of the outbreak on Camas Prairie and warning him that probably the non-treaties would next strike at Kamiah. When the sub-agent appealed to Lawyer as chief with the power to protect the white settlers, Lawyer replied:

Oh, no, my people we are Christians. We cannot fight, we cannot kill. To kill is not Christian, the Missionary Lady tell us. We have no arms. We do not shoot our

brothers.

Nothing Mr. Redfield could say or threaten, no bribe he could offer had any effect in shaking Lawyer's firm conviction of pacifism. Nevertheless, James Lawyer promised to do what he could and urged Mr. Redfield to take his family and Susan McBeth to the government house, where the Rev. and Mrs. R.N. Fee, teacher and matron of the school lived. Here the frightened whites spent the day, their only protection one lone rifle, a Smith and Wesson, the prized possession of Mr. Redfield, who labored under no such scruples as James Lawyer. The two other white employees, Peter Stagg, the tinner and gunsmith, sometimes called the engineer, and Mr. Sharpe, the blacksmith, remained in their stout log house together. Watching and waiting the long hours not knowing what to expect at any moment, the fugitives toward nightfall were assured by James Lawyer's scouts, George Waters and Felix Corbett, that there was no immediate danger. The men returned home for the night, the Fees keeping Sue with them.

After a restless and nervous night filled with ominous and imaginary alarms, two letters arrived by runner from Lapwai, a messenger who himself terrified the whites for his appearance was definitely of the non-treaty group:

the long hairs did not belong to the church ... the wild type — shirt, leggings, moccasins, blanket about his waist, and nothing on his head.

John Monteith urged the Kamiah residents to leave in all haste under guards secured by James Lawyer. But sending such an order was a very different matter from following it, for the scout reported that the hostiles were guarding their one outlet, the escape route up the hill. Mr. Redfield consulted the men in the group, suggesting the possibility of running the Clearwater. But Peter Stagg, who knew the river much better than anyone else, pronounced such a notion suicidal because of the bad rapids and high water.

All day Friday, the fifteenth, the little group remained close to each other digesting the alarming rumors that filtered in from the hostile camp. Next to their own survival, the need to preserve their few essential possessions occupied their minds and efforts. The one unattached woman in the group, Sue was

helpless in this dilemma until the Williams brothers came to her rescue. In her trunk she packed her most cherished belongings and carefully wrapped her precious dictionary with her other papers and placed it on top. This Robert and Mark buried in her root house under a cleverly camouflaged mass of old vegetables. But Sue's organ presented a much more complicated problem. She and her pupils agreed that of all her possessions this one item would be the most gleefully hacked to pieces by attacking non-treaties. The Williamses were still arguing possibilities when James Lawyer passed by. With his usually decisive chieftain's air he unhesitatingly decided that the only place to hide the organ would be behind the root house. Taking charge of the operation, he directed the Williams brothers as they carried the organ out, wrapped it up with an old tent James produced, and slanting it against the rear of the root house, covered it with dirt. Banking the dirt along the edges, they painstakingly erased traces of their work by placing sod over the top.

As dusk blanketed the little settlement, an especially frightening account came. Again Mr. Redfield gathered those under his protection and after dark ordered that they all mount horses to leave town. Since Sue was unaccustomed to horseback riding, it was difficult to decide which terrified her more: the horse or the marauding savages. Finally by the combined efforts of Mr. Redfield and Mr. Sharpe, they managed to hoist Sue astride old Tom, Mr. Sharpe promising to lead the horse. Each of the Fees had a horse, and on old Rob, the young mother, Mrs. Redfield, carried her new baby in her arms. Mr. Redfield held two-year-old Bertie in his arms; behind him their older boy, Charlie, clung to his father's back. Peter Stagg on his grey horse led the procession up into the hills of the canyon, nearly a mile away from the dreaded line of attack by the hostiles. Here the little group stiff from the mountain chill and tense from strained listening waited the coming of the uncertain dawn.

As the first rays of the early morning lightened the sky, Mr. Redfield and Mr. Sharpe cautiously reconnoitered in the foggy mist. Not far from their hiding place they met "Maggie, a squaw who had been living with Mr. Chapman." She gave them the comforting news that after starting the night before toward Kamiah, the hostiles had turned near the top of the hill and

changed their course toward Mt. Idaho. The two men then returned to the empty Kamiah houses and collected the rudiments of a cold breakfast to take back to the waiting exiles in the canyon. Reassured by the knowledge that the non-treaties had turned from Kamiah to Mt. Idaho, the men counseled that everyone return to Kamiah once more. But not so the women or Mr. Fee. Believing themselves safely hidden out of view here in the canyon pines, they would not budge, and here they were determined to remain. But because Mr. Redfield was greatly concerned over his wife's precarious health and their new-born child, he was just as determined to get his little family back under shelter before another night. In desperation he took with him two of his Nez Perce friends, Kentuck and Felix Corbett, to the hiding place to convince his wife and the others that they were no safer than back in their homes. Both Mrs. Redfield and Sue indignantly berated him for his "treachery" and joined each other in tears of exasperation and nervousness. But realizing finally that their improvised hide-out was no longer a secret, they resigned themselves to returning to Kamiah again.

Here Saturday night was spent huddled together in the government log house, where their fitful rest was shattered before dawn by the arrival of another Nez Perce messenger, who fell exhausted, face down, on the floor. Poor distressed John Monteith, having heard not one word about the fate of the Kamiah group, begged for information of their whereabouts and welfare. This time he could tell them that there were some protecting troops on the Cottonwood, but the runner had again encountered hostiles on the hill still blocking their escape route.

Another night and then the Sabbath. Undoubtedly as the sun again rose, they all remembered the story of the Whitman massacre when Eliza Hart Spalding had refused to flee for her life on a Sabbath. It was an ominously quiet day with no church services, only the rippling Clearwater in the background of their consciousness, as they strained to hear the first echo of the expected war-whoop.

But the next morning, Monday, brought still another message from Lapwai with confirmation of the worst news yet: Colonel Perry had been defeated by Joseph on the Salmon River and Lapwai civilians were gathered at the fort expecting Joseph to

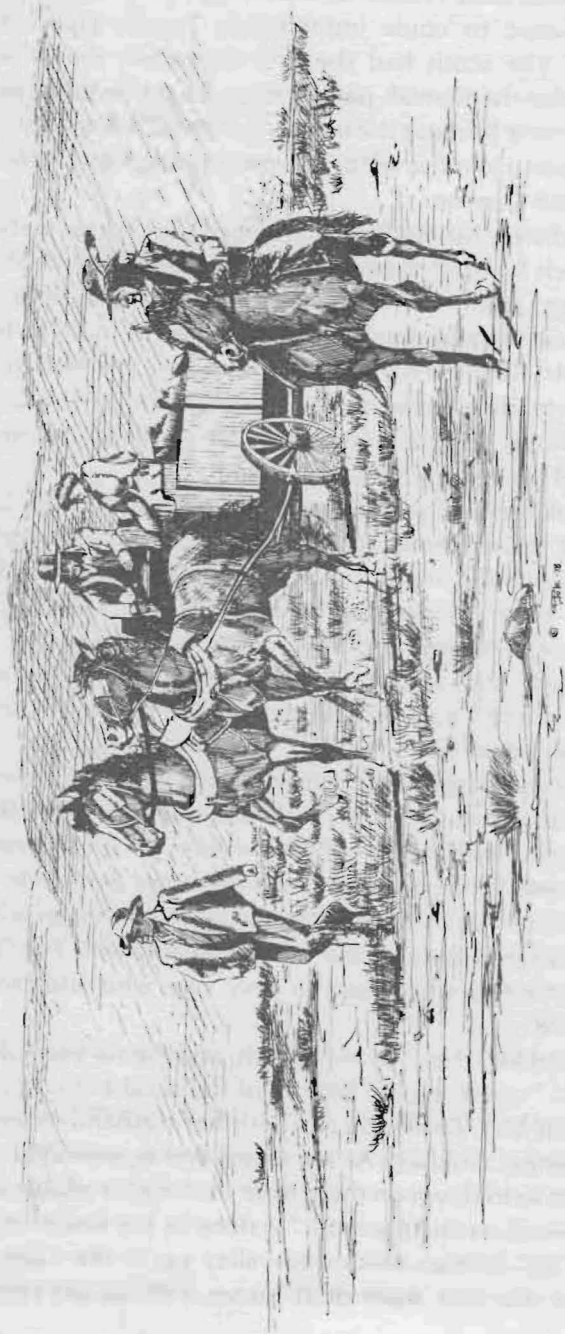
strike there next. Those at Kamiah, if they had not already started, were to come immediately "under guard of James Lawyer." The scout had the first intimation that it was now possible for the Kamiah people to go up the mountains to cross Camas Prairie because the hostile guards at the top of the hill had withdrawn to join the victorious celebrating band at the head of White Bird Canyon.

Immediately Mr. Redfield harnessed four horses to the wagon into which he hustled everyone except himself, Mr. Sharp, and Mr. Stagg. Again the whites evacuated Kamiah with only the clothes on their backs. They were driven in haste to the ferry, where Mr. Redfield had his flat boat ready, attached to the steel cable. Reloading the women, children, and Mr. Fee into his boat, Mr. Redfield ferried them across the swollen Clearwater and returned for the harness and wagon:

I took them all across, came back, put my harness in the boat, turned them loose in the river, which was very high with a strong, rough current. Old Bob took the lead and the other horses all followed. Upon reaching the opposite shore, and no one at hand to guide their landing, they all turned and came back to where I was. I was greatly worried, fearing that the hostiles . . . might come upon us . . .¹⁰

At this most auspicious moment, Nine-Pipes appeared and by the bribe of two California blankets agreed to swim the horses over again, with Mr. Redfield following with the rest of the equipment. Once more back on the other bank, Mr. Redfield struggled to harness the frightened and tired horses without the help of anyone except "the most estimable Mrs. Fee," a sister of the Monteiths, who was the only one who tried to give his assistance.

Mr. and Mrs. Fee, Susan McBeth, and the six-year-old Charlie Redfield "sat flat on the bottom of the dead axe wagon; on the front seat Mrs. Redfield rode with her husband-driver and the two younger children. At any moment they expected a howling attack to swirl down on them from the heights above; the heavy wagon-load started the long, "as steep as any house roof," climb out of the Kamiah shadowed-valley up to the Camas prairie. Because the four stout draft horses without any relief had all



they could do to make it to the top of the grade, everyone had to walk whenever it was possible except Sue, whose lameness prevented her keeping up with the rest of the wagons. Each mile presented new hazards and uncertainties; there was no reliable information of the movements of the non-treaty groups, who might be lurking around each bend in the trail to swoop down on them from above. Only once did the party stop and that was but a brief respite when the exhausted horses were watered. Though devoutly believing in God's protection, the fugitives were comforted by James Lawyer and his group of some forty Christian Nez Perces. It was reassuring to Sue to recognize among them her five students as well as Felix and Kentuck Corbett and other Christian friends. Mounted on their cayuses, they accompanied the wagon load of whites all the way up from the banks of the Clearwater, across Camas Prairie, and down the other grade to Lapwai throughout the long travelling day and far into the late twilight. Consistent in their pacific teaching, the treaty Indians rode unarmed. General Howard quotes "the excellent and successful lady teacher at Kamiah, Miss McBeth," giving him this account of the guard:

The Indians . . . treated us with great delicacy. They rode well ahead. They watched sharply to the rear. Some of them cantered off to round hills on our left; and they searched out all possible hiding places where an enemy could lurk, or jump upon us suddenly, and they brought us all without harm these sixty or seventy miles.¹¹

After the long hours of cramped jolting on the straw-covered bottom of the "dead-axe wagon" bed, the adults, the Fees and Susan McBeth, stiff from fatigue, had to be carried into the fort. Susan, who had schooled herself for years never to cry, to maintain the most rigid control, having once dissolved into tears with Mrs. Redfield, found herself helplessly weeping from relief of tension. It was almost unbelievable to find herself in the strong protecting arms of soldiers, being transferred from hiding in the canyon pines to solid fort walls, a Gibraltar of safety. As she had four years before when she first arrived in Lapwai, Sue fell into an exhausted sleep lulled into unconsciousness again by the Lapwai creek.

By morning Sue had regained the poise of 'the little mother,"

in command of herself, and was able to assume the poise more appropriate to God's missionary. First she must locate her "Boys" and those other loyal Nez Percés who had been recruited to guard their escape. Sue had brought only the barest necessities but among them in her valise was a packet of small pictures. These she distributed as a token of her appreciation for their loyal protection.¹² Whatever strength of will Sue could muster was badly needed in the small fort, where terrified mothers clutched their crying children. General Howard, experienced in both war and fear, wrote:

I had great experience of panics in the East . . . Bull Run . . . from Vienna to Chair Ridge, after McClellan's return from the Peninsula . . . But nothing there was so continuous and feverish as the panics which took place at our small fort while we were waiting for the troops. On one occasion two friendly Indians . . . rushed toward the fort with the utmost speed of their ponies, and cried out something which the excited people of the garrison took to mean 'Indians are coming.' Defences were made; the little garrison was arranged for its best resistance. Some of the officers were at the top of the hill, in two minutes, looking out. Laundresses and children, wild with fear, and with hair flying, came running to the officers' line of houses. A resolute army lady gathered and took charge of a large number of women and children. Some incidents had a comic and ludicrous side, and, in the retrospect afforded much merriment: as ladies seizing rifles and pistols, barricading doors and cellarways, stepping into water-pails in dark passages. The alarm was serious for a short time, until the frightening cause was made known through the interpreter, who had bravely met the incoming Indians, friendly ones we knew, and learned the truth.¹³

The Kamiah group arrived at the Lapwai fort the evening of Monday, June 18, the day the news was received "of the terrible disaster at White-Bird Canyon." The four days they waited there by the Lapwai Creek for escort out to the safe world of Lewiston seemed an eternity of time.¹³ Now bedraggled refugees still

wearing the clothes in which they had escaped from Kamiah, they were furnished a change of clothes by the ladies of the recently organized Presbyterian Church in Lewiston. They had been called together by Mrs. Charles Bunnell to help in this emergency.

The ALMOTA took them down the Snake River toward the Columbia, Portland, and the secure world. Here Sue was welcomed at many church gatherings, where her escape was hailed as another manifestation of God's marvelous care of His own. As the Lindsleys and Ladds helped Sue replenish her wardrobe and regain strength from the recent ordeal, her Ohio family and friends were reading in the *ADVANCE* of June 14, 1877, with admiring awe General Howard's remarks:

Her work seems simple, just like the Master's in some respects. For example, she gathers her disciples around her a few at a time and, having herself learned their language so as to speak it passably, she instructs them and makes teachers of these disciples. There is the lounge and the chair, there the cook stove and table, there in another room the little cabinet organ and a few benches, a few books here and there, everything of the simplest in style and work.¹⁴

CHAPTER 3

WE-YE-KIN-TROUBLES

After Sue McBeth was escorted to Lapwai at the outbreak of the Joseph War, it was obvious that her teaching could not be safely continued in Kamiah. Emotionally very depressed, Sue was nearer giving up her Idaho mission than at any other time. She had wished to visit her friend, Mrs. Mary Easton Sibley of St. Charles, Missouri, but Dr. Lowrie refused her the funds to travel and ordered her to remain in Portland.¹ Instead of the consoling understanding of a sympathetic listener like Mrs. Sibley, Sue was handed about Portland for almost two months on exhibit as something of a curiosity, a heroine who had escaped unknown Indian terrors. While she was in the city the Reverend John R. Thompson, the Synodical Missionary, in August brought four of Sue's five pupils from Kamiah: James Hines, Archie and Jimmy Lawyer, and Robert Williams. Although none of them had yet been ordained as ministers, Mr. Thompson and the Reverend Robert Boyd had examined them in the theology Sue had taught them, and the former was

astonished at the knowledge . . . the way they understood our plan of salvation . . . asked them to give answers of their own to . . . 'What is faith?' and . . . was delighted with their answers . . . ²

and licensed them to preach. In the Portland churches where they spoke they were a sensation, and Sue as their "little mother" glowed with pride of her accomplishments. This experience of being a person of some consequence was not in the least distasteful to Sue. But such a regime did not provide her with the rest she sorely needed nor the leisure to recoup her fagged nerves and to rebuild her depleted energy.

After the reservation had settled down into its more normal routine with the non-treaties in retreat over the mountains in Montana, it was considered safe for Sue and others to return to

their Nez Perces duties. But Sue was ordered to re-establish her school under the shadow of the fort and the agency at Lapwai. Unquestionably Agent John Monteith grasped this opportunity to keep a more watchful eye upon Sue's activities. Before hostilities had disrupted the Kamiah school, Sue's independence, her meager reports, and her theological teaching had brought adverse comments, questionings, and criticisms. Just a few months before the outbreak of the war (February, 1877), Dr. Lowrie had written to John Monteith that Sue's reports lacked information and that the authorities in Washington were far from satisfied. "The government can only deal with the common education of Indians, not religious instruction." Even her notable visitor, General O.O. Howard, had heard the rumors:

I hear that the Indian Department is afraid that Miss McBeth is teaching 'theology,' and order her back to 'rudiements.' Certainly not theology in the way of 'isms' of any kind I am ready to affirm. I told her to call it 'theophily,' if a high-sounding name were needed for god's love.³

Sue was heartsick to be forced to desert Kamiah and to relocate in Lapwai. She manoeuvred on every possible pretext to make frequent Kamiah visits to maintain her connections and influence in the Kamiah church.

The support and cooperation of the Kamiah Nez Perces had been invaluable in conducting the whites to safety. Other Christian Indians had individually rendered fearless services as scouts and trusted messengers. Among them was Abraham Brooks, who had been shot in the face, and lived out his lifetime of blindness on a pension from the Government.⁴ But some of Sue's former pupils had refused to fight their own non-treaty tribesmen, even in self-defense. John Monteith wrote Sue while she was still in Portland, July 27, 1877:

I knew from talks I had with you in regard to our late Civil war that you were a good deal of a Quaker and James Lawyer and others refused to take arms and gave the reasons they did I thought it might be you had talked with them the same.

In her St. Louis experience, Sue had seen first hand the cruelty,

the suffering, and the futility of armed conflict. Fortified by her Biblical convictions, she had become much more like the Friends than even she realized.

But despite all these conflicting difficulties and half-believed rumors, Sue returned to Lapwai as a heroine. After the dramatic escape and the publication of General Howard's enthusiastic endorsement, much of the McBeth problem was temporarily overlooked by the authorities, at the local agency, in Philadelphia, and in Washington, D.C. There were just too many other more pressing problems to be settled, so Sue was again left much to her own devices. On March 1, 1878, Dr. Lowrie thanked her for pictures of her Indian students and although he made annoying observations about the lack of an ordained Presbyterian minister among the Nez Perces, he concluded with the remark that her work was a great blessing to the tribe. In the fall of that year Sue again asked for a printing press and received an emphatic "NO." To soften the curt refusal, Dr. Lowrie finished his letter with "You are one of its [Presbyterian Board's] esteemed missionaries."⁵

Even though Sue might privately consider herself as a preacher, minister, and teacher of theology, Dr. Lowrie definitely did not. In November, 1878, he finally succeeded in sending the young George Deffenbaugh fresh from Princeton to strengthen the Presbyterian Mission on the Reservation. Dr. Lowrie wrote John Monteith, who was leaving the agency, that he hoped the Reverend Deffenbaugh would make a good practical worker so that "our excellent Miss McBeth's work will still be spent in her valuable labors."⁶ With the coming of the Rev. Deffenbaugh and his bride, the problem of space and sufficient housing arose. Overtures made to Dr. Lowrie concerning a new house and school room were slow to materialize.

One of the inevitable outcomes of the Joseph revolt was a revaluation of the Nez Perces reservation affairs by all the authorities involved. During these trying months, Sue heard again from Mrs. Sibley, who had opposed her leaving St. Louis two years ago to come to Idaho. Mary Sibley wrote calling attention to the December 13, 1877, issue of the ADVANCE, where

Secretary Schurz, speaking of the attempts usually made to trace out and detect Indian agency frauds, by having an inspector visit an agency, says it is like 'catching birds with a brass band.'

Well had Mrs. Sibley learned the truth of this with her husband at Fort Osage years ago, and now Sue was learning the same lesson first hand. John Monteith, one of the most able and understanding but the most unfortunate of the Nez Perce agents, was forced to retire in the confusing shuffle. As Dr. Lowrie wrote him: "We live in a changing world."⁷ With his removal went one of the best supporters at the agency that Sue ever had. In a farewell letter to her, John Monteith wrote that the Presbyterian mission needed "a man who can read them [the Nez Percés] and you know I do that before trusting much."⁸

In this time of discussion and shifting authority, Sue learned much of the Nez Perce past. Now with her command of the Nez Perce language, she was sure she was becoming one of the best informed white people on the reservation about the history of these Indians. Her chief teacher was the devoted elder, "Uncle Billy" Williams [Jonathan], the father of Robert, Luke, and Mark. Elder Billy's childhood memory held many stories from his grandfather, who had shaken hands with Lewis and Clark and talked with them in sign language, more than sixty years ago on that long-ago fall day on the Clearwater River bank, September 20, 1805. In 1831 when Billy was about ten years old, he recalled seeing the four Nez Perce men starting out across the Lolo Trail toward the great unknown, St. Louis. Billy said "they went to find Lewis and Clark and to learn about the better way to worship God."⁹

According to Billy, when the Nez Perce first met the Lewis and Clark expedition in the Clearwater Valley they were cautious but curious about everything that was different and new about these strangers. The tribe was then living as it had from time immemorial in long houses or in crowded tepees where family distinctions were hardly consistent with such living arrangements. It was customary that each man usually had several wives. They were a nomadic people who wandered widely with the seasons, the most venturesome crossing by the Lolo or Salmon River trails to hunt in the Buffalo Country to the

east, over the Bitterroot mountains into Montana territory. They did not practice agriculture, for not only were they people on the move most of the year, but many of them were influenced by the "Dreamer" philosophy.¹⁰ About the "Dreamers" Billy was vague and hazy. He knew the belief of the Dreamers had caused trouble in Kamiah about "wounding their Mother Earth," but Billy, himself an ardent gardener, had been initiated into the mysteries of seeds and cultivation by Spalding. Here James Hines must interrupt to tell again the excitement when "his" Mr. Smith, who had followed Spalding in Kamiah, had been ordered to leave [1840] by the two sub-chiefs, Insinmalakin and Inmtamlaiakan. James and Billy agreed that one of Mr. Smith's difficulties was his persistence in excoriating the Nez Perces' Mother Earth with his heavy home-made plow. Billy would shake his old head solemnly and conclude with the reiteration that the Nez Perces had always gathered roots, herbs, especially the camas root, to store for the winter months.¹¹

Billy related that a long time ago [1730] the Nez Perces' old ways had changed greatly because they had acquired horses. He thought they had come from the south. This event had given his people a much wider range of territory and had opened up to them a whole new world of possibilities. On the fertile fields of the Wallowa Valley, at their mild wintering place where the Clearwater and Snake Rivers met at Tscemicinum (meeting of the waters), and on the high Camas Prairie, they developed the Appaloosa horse, among the best of the West. But Billy reasoned horses had not been entirely good for the Nez Perces; they had come to value them too highly — even now more than God. Billy quoted old Elder Noah, who said, "Horses are not wise."¹² Billy "was rich," not only in the pre-history traditions of his people and their acquisitions of horses but also in stories about the primitive myths of the Nez Perces.¹³

There were many tales like that of the monster dragon in the Kamiah Valley who was tricked into submission by clever Coyote. Like other North American Indians, the Nez Perces had such explanatory stories about practically all the phenomena of nature: the Mountain Spirit [Al-la-lim-yah], magpie, the seasons.¹⁴ Closely related to these legends was that older tribal belief "whose central feature was the weyekin."¹⁵ The We-ye-kin

was the spirit of some animal or plant that every young Nez Perce sought as his special protector. If Billy was uncertain about some aspects of the Dreamers, he knew all about Weyekins. In fact:

On one of the missionary trips to the Spokanes with Mr. Deffenbaugh and native helpers, they were very hungry when one of them shot some kind of a bird or fowl. When at dinner it was passed to Billy, he silently refused it. There was no laughing about it. They knew that his 'Wy-ya-kin,' or attending spirit, was of the same species. Although he did not trust it now, he could not eat it.¹⁶

Later from neighboring tribes there was superimposed other cults with other gods, many vestiges of which Sue knew were latent even in her Indian church members. Billy told how after the coming of Lewis and Clark, his people doubted more and more their old ways of worship, but "no matter how hard they tried, it was all fog." Long before the two explorers had surprised the little boys playing beside the Clearwater River, the Nez Percés had heard about a strange new God from King George's men. Now they were more than ever bewildered. Then Billy said,

the people began to worship the Sun, and he, Billy, remembered dancing round the sun pole which was set up near the present site of Walla Walla . . . the pole had flags on it. We do not know where the flags came from."¹⁷

Billy now worried over his people for he claimed that far too many of the Nez Percés, "the bad ones," still believed and practiced such heathen beliefs, no matter what the Missionary Lady taught.

Of all the manifestations of these barbaric customs the one that most distressed Sue McBeth was the Nez Percés' early primitive Indian beliefs. Although she wrote in a letter to Dr. Lindsley:

Of all the manifestations of these barbaric customs the one that most distressed Sue McBeth was the Nez Percés' observance of the Fourth of July, probably because it was most openly celebrated. It was an annual nightmare to her, the epitome of the resurgent evils of the Nez Percés' early primitive Indian beliefs. Although she wrote in a letter to Dr. Lindsley:

No white person living now can see under the Nez Perce surface as she [Sue] sees it¹⁸

there was much that was mysterious, deep, dark, unfathomably unholy and pagan even to her. In the Fourth spectacles, so popular with the agents, lay much of this paganism. Some manifestations were obvious; others obscure. There was in these displays to Sue a profane distortion of Christian practice:

There is such a mixture of Christian beliefs with paganism; for instance, the Indians will pray before participating in a horse race, thus it is used to sanctify a heathen rite.¹⁹

Even if Mr. Boyd or Mr. Deffenbaugh saw a heathen feast with quiet turning of food or dish in the direction of the Sun, this action would have no meaning for them.²⁰

There were without question long standing prehistoric tribal rituals centered near the time of the summer solstice, rituals of sex and fertility wholly foreign and unbelievable to the McBeths who had been carefully nurtured in Victorian Christian mores. With the earlier language barriers, these rituals remained unexplained to the whites. As the Nez Perces began to understand Christian customs, their reticence increased. Nevertheless, sexual rituals were attractive features of the old ways which even some Christian Indians shamefacedly practiced secretly. There may be some connection between these rites, the *Ka-oo-yit* which later became associated with the Cherry Blossom Festival, the camas-root-gathering, or the Mud Springs Festival.

The earliest white men consistently associating with the Nez Perces were the Hudson Bay Company traders, "King George's Men," who observed all the Nez Perces' festivities around the first week of July, or late June. The McBeths were astonished to learn that the Britishers had explained the Fourth of July to the Indians. It is more likely that King George's Men cynically labelled long-standing tribal habits as "Fourth of July" and sought to maintain its more sensational aspects for their own frontier amusement. In the time of the McBeths, a typical Fourth, lasting a week or so, was a three-ring circus combined with sawdust trail revival meetings. The various bands of the Nez Perces gathered at the agency and under the leadership of the

more heathen element prepared their elaborate regalia, war paint, and feathers. The swiftest and most highly trained horses were carefully selected from their war steeds. Braves clad only in war paint and feathers raced upon these spirited Appaloosa horses. Wailing women pursued them. War drums and gambling shattered the evening quiet. Wives and valuable Appaloosa horses were exchanged with the flip of the dice. Most of the Nez Perces found nothing incongruous in adding to these festivities a Fourth of July patriotic oration and parade and even a Christian Communion.

These years immediately following the Joseph War were anxious ones for Sue. She had purposely restricted her teaching entirely to a select group of young men whom she was training to go out as ministers among their own people. Sue was most anxious to see some concrete evidence of her work, to secure the ordination of a Nez Perce pastor. Of the four the Reverend Thompson had brought to Portland after licensing them to preach, there was no question in her mind which one was most advanced, spiritually. She could quickly eliminate James Hines, already in his middle fifties, "a good natured gossipy old man." As for those Lawyer brothers! Despite their brilliance, Archie's ability as a "spell binder" and Jimmie's tremendous popularity with the people, Sue did not like their general attitude. They were flippant and questioning about basic doctrine. She was convinced that they "do trouble people" with their "splurging around." She suspected even that they privately agreed with James Reuben, another "leader . . . always . . . on the outlook for the welfare of his people," who was reputed to have decided against the ministry because there was "too much mystery" involved in Sue's theology. The Lawyers' devotion to their father's memory gave them too much of the old chief's grand manner for the requisite humility of the Christian leader.²¹

With the Lawyers not fully committed, this left her "best beloved," Robert Williams. The next step was to have Robert presented to Presbytery for questioning and ordination. Oh, oh, if only she had that coveted "Rev." before her name and was not forced to work behind the scenes through men! Young Mr. Deffenbaugh was pliable and agreeable enough most of the time under Sue's prodding, and the newly arrived Boyds were also

young and anxious not to offend the older missionary. But it galled Sue's soul to be a helpless woman when she could have pushed Robert Williams through Presbytery so much more readily than would three dilatory men.

There was one item a mere woman could do, something that wouldn't even occur to the men as necessary. She must see that Robert was suitably garbed for this august occasion. True, his hair had been chopped off for years and he had long ago put away the blanket to wear a coat. But what a coat! home-made, ill fitting, rusty and patched. To the Lord Sue took her request and then promptly wrote a careful description of her need to several Ohio and Pennsylvania missionary societies.

The day was set and the place: Lewiston, April 2, 1879, but still no coat. And then it happened: God answered her petition from the contents of a box from the Shady Side Presbyterian Church of Pittsburgh. A coat, big enough across the shoulders, a tailored coat, still almost new. True, there were a few well mended patches and the sleeves hung down too far over Robert's hands but nothing that could not easily be remedied. Sue was jubilant as she adjusted it to Robert's lumpy figure and explained carefully to him that this was a special garment from the Lord, this was to be his Presbytery Coat.²²

The weeks crept by and Sue's tension mounted as this first real test of her teaching approached: Robert's appearance before Presbytery. She had concentrated all her efforts in preparing Robert both spiritually and physically for this ordeal. And then the blow fell! Without a word of warning on the very morning of The Great Day Robert appeared at her door wearing his same old baggy, sack-like coat. Standing beside him was "a large-framed," heavy set youth with glowing face and newly clipped hair, wearing the treasured Presbytery Coat.

Robert, ecstatic with delight, explained to Sue that here was his first true convert: James Hayes. He had appeared as a young boy during that 1877 summer turmoil fleeing from the "fierce White Bird band" with his mother seeking protection with the treaty-Christian Kamiah people. There he had listened with awe to one of his own tribesmen talking "in the white house among the pines" about Jesus and he had seen the Light. Robert had triumphantly

cut off his flowing locks and dressed him in his own *best* suit making this overgrown boy feel like David in Saul's armor.

Robert, hurt by the "vexed face" of Sue, was surprised by her private questioning. What now could she do to make Robert "presentable" among the white ministers at this last moment?

But, Miss McBeth, he a Christian now. I want him a scholler of yours you would not allow him . . . in school in a blanket he have no coat . . . I had two — the Bible says 'He that hath two coats let him give to him that do not have anything.' "²³

The Presbytery minutes do not describe Robert's attire; we only know that:

The examination on religious experience was conducted by Rev. George S. Deffenbaugh; in theology by Rev. Robert Boyd; and, in church government by Rev. Thomas M. Boyd. The candidate also preached a trial sermon from Eph. 2:20 And are built upon the foundation of the Apostles and prophets Jesus Christ himself being the chief corner stone.²⁴

Having proved himself successful in the ministry of the Word, and satisfactory to his people among whom he was preaching, thus was Robert Williams ordained the first Nez Perce Presbyterian minister.

Sue's original class of Kamiah was now fairly well scattered. After the Joseph War and Robert Williams' ordination, the Lawyers never again were regular attendants. James Hayes, resplendent in his first coat, was an eager beginner, and others were anxious to join him: Enoch Pond, Peter Lindsley, Moses Monteith, William Wheeler, and Silas Whitman. Whenever he found time from his pastoral duties, Robert Williams came seeking material for his increasing repertoire of sermons. James Hines was in the classroom "part of the time."²⁵

With this greater number of Nez Perces, Sue now became more and more conscious of another great difficulty facing her. Her growing awareness of the hidden but deeply-rooted paganism of her pupils worried her greatly. All their tribal associations tended to reenforce in the men those very residual beliefs from the past that she was struggling to eradicate.

Because those nearest her pupils were their wives and families, it became imperative to Sue that a school must be established for the Indian women. Their wives must be taught not only Christian doctrines but also the civilized ways of home-making. Sue recognized all these new demands frankly in a letter July 3, 1879, to Dr. Lowrie in which she noted it was a time of crises on the Reservation.

It is vital to the interest of the Nez Perces that they take their places as 'men among men,' as speedily as possible.

Sue readily admitted her interests were not domestic and that her forte was not teaching women. She remarked that General Howard had observed that a woman teaching men elevated the status of all women, the Nez Perce women included.

In all this atmosphere of change, Sue became apprehensive when she learned that her sister Kate was seeking from the Board the appointment as a teacher for the Nez Perce women. Unlike Kate, Sue did not believe that the old days in Fairfield, where they had started out as young sisters together, could be recaptured. In the intervening years they had grown too far apart. She could never forget the bitter sting of Kate's disapproval of Eben Law. The older sister also realized from her own six years' experience in Idaho that from her sheltered past Kate would find the adjustments on this rough frontier even more difficult than she could possibly anticipate. In the final analysis Sue wanted her "Boys" to herself. Perhaps subconsciously she feared any competition or comparison with a member of her own family. Sue really desired a much younger woman, one who might be expected to be more pliable under her capable and knowledgeable management. Upon too many former occasions Kate had stubbornly resisted Sue's direction and contrariwise had set out obstinately upon her own predetermined course. Sue therefore wrote vaguely to Dr. Lowrie of another candidate that she favored for teaching the women. And thus it was with many reservations and misgivings that Sue awaited Kate in October, 1879.

CHAPTER 4

THE LITTLE WHITE COTTAGE

It was not at all surprising that in 1879 Kate McBeth left her established home, friends, and beloved church in Wellsville to travel to the remote pioneer Territory of Idaho. In the first place she was impelled by the strong missionary ferment that was characteristic of many serious Americans from the early 1830s until the turn of the new century. Added to this latent missionary urge was a desire to be with Sue again. From her early years Kate had idolized her older sister. Their association in Fairfield and Sigourney, Iowa, had the glamor of youth in retrospect. Kate still felt close to Sue, for whether Sue had been in Goodwater at the Choctaw Mission, or in the emotionally exhausting Christian Commission or later social work in St. Louis with Dr. James Brookes, she had always written home regularly and remained close to the family and friends in Wellsville. Indeed, in many respects the McBeths of Wellsville were an unusual family; they never questioned that their Scotch Presbyterian God had destined them for a marked purpose, and they were alert, capable, and ready to cooperate with Him to accomplish that purpose. After the terrifying events of the Joseph War in 1877, Sue's family in Ohio were anxious about her welfare. Sue's increasing physical affliction caused her more and more difficulty in getting among her Nez Perce students as she desired. Kate, teaching in the North Sewickley Academy in Pennsylvania, was intrigued with the many letters that Sue had written home about her experiences with the Nez Percés. All factors combined to urge Kate to go to Idaho: the longing for a change, love for her sister, and the McBeths' desire for missionary activity. Sue, not enthusiastic about Kate's coming, wrote that her younger sister could not face the rough life and hardships of the pioneer country. On her part, Kate, who had been closely associated with Sue in their youth and early

teaching, refused to be dissuaded from her resolve to join her older sister. After the death of their mother and the marriages of the younger sisters, there were now no ties in Ohio to prevent her working with the Nez Perces in Idaho. But despite all these promptings, Kate's heart ached as she contemplated leaving her childhood home.

This modest home by the Ohio River on the northern edge of Wellsville had been the source of great inspiration to all the family nurtured there. Alexander McBeth, their father, was born in Doune, Scotland, in 1800. In Scotland he had learned the stone mason's trade and in 1827 married Mary Henderson of Sterling. Their first child, born in Scotland, did not live, but a daughter, Susan, was born there in 1830. The neighborhood of Sterling, Scotland, is rich in the history and glamor of its grim castle with stories of Mary Queen of Scots, but it was a difficult area in which to hew out a living, even for a stone mason. Alexander and Mary had heard from his brother in Ohio of opportunities across the Atlantic. The young couple was self reliant, young, adventuresome, and ambitious, so they arranged passage to the United States. In 1831 before the days of steam ships, transportation over the ocean was slow and uncertain. The huge sailing ships of the early half of the nineteenth century were at the caprice of the winds and storms. May, the month they were on the ocean, is cold and stormy on the North Atlantic. It must have been especially trying for the pregnant Mary with her little, year-old Susan; however, Mary was buoyed up in spirits by Alexander and by their unquestioning Calvinistic trust that they were following God's will for them.

Once in the new country, although at this time there were Scotsmen from the old country on every hand, the unfamiliar speech of Americans and the rawness of the newly developing land taxed all the faith and composure they possessed.

In 1832, the journey from New York to the Ohio River was formidable. In contrast to the ramparts of the Alleghenies with their long ridges and narrow valleys, the remembered highlands of Scotland seemed much more friendly and inviting to the homesick travelers. Even nature itself in North America was more massive and striking than in Great Britain. Before the Alleghenies and the rushing, wide Susquehanna and

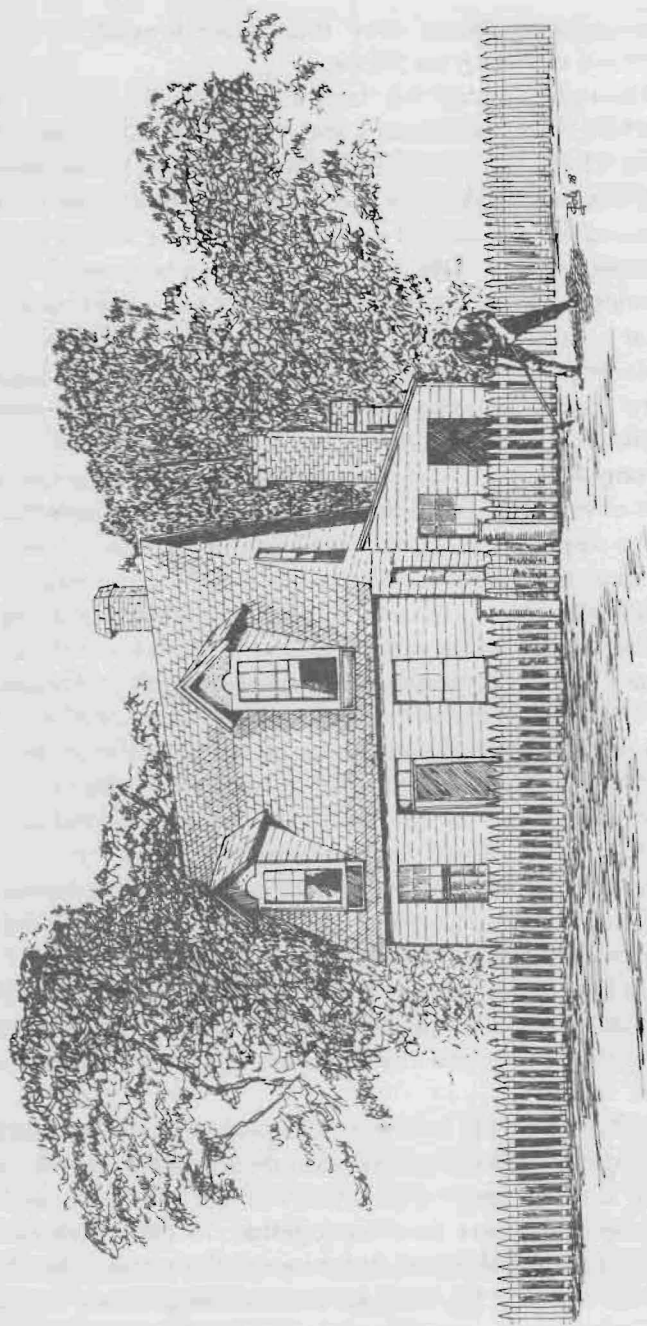
Monongahela Rivers they must have longed for home in Scotland so rich in traditions.

Alexander settled his family in Knoxville, Ohio, near his brother. Here, Alexander's and Mary's first American baby was born. After Mary's difficult and long journey, it is not surprising that this unnamed infant also died. Alexander found immediate demand for his skill of fashioning building stones in Ohio, a frontier region of logs and wood. It was a busy country, rapidly developing from the forests and plains to be the heartland of a great nation. By the 1830s temporary log structures were being replaced by more permanent buildings. Problems and hardships were many, but the dwellers on the Ohio felt secure in confidence of their future; God had for them a noble destiny.

Soon Alexander and Mary moved to the young Ohio River port of Wellsville, seventeen miles north of Steubenville. Close to the river on a point of land where ships passed within hailing distance, Alexander carved the foundation for his modest home on a bench below a limestone cliff. This "little white cottage" was in the midst of many activities. On the Ohio River ships passed up and down carrying freight between North and South. Near the McBeth home was Yellow Creek, and in front of their house two roads reached out, one into the West and the other into the North. The McBeths' was not a large home but it was well proportioned and so solidly erected that it withstood the floods of the Ohio River for seventy-five years. In Wellsville, Alexander's skill was much in demand for building foundations, for carving tombstones, and for erecting wharves and breakwaters along the riverfront.

Just before the move to Wellsville, Sue's sister Kate was born in 1833 in Knoxville. In addition to Sue and Kate, two more baby daughters, Mary and Elizabeth, arrived within the next seven years.

Wellsville, Ohio, between 1830 and 1850 offered more than the ordinary amount of change and excitement. The Mississippi River with its great tributaries was the link that held early nineteenth century America together. In 1830 there were few railroads, and the era of steam navigation was just developing. The towns along the Ohio River were being rushed into the era of rapid scientific changes. Even before the age of steamboats,



the rivers were the major avenues into the frontier. And then Robert Fulton's invention made the central river communications system a basic artery of the growing nation. Almost overnight cities on the rivers rose and flourished before giving way to the added efficiency of the railroads.

By 1840 Wellsville knew an activity it had never before experienced. Directly across the river lay the northwestern part of Virginia before the secession of West Virginia. Wellsville was the nearest point between the Great Lakes and the Ohio River, a location that made it a haven for the trans-shipment of goods and for escaping slaves from the South. All about the McBeths were freedom-loving Scotch Calvinists and New England Puritans revolting against slavery and taking the law into their own hands to aid black men from the other side of the Ohio River to escape to Cleveland and Canada. This was the route that Eliza took in *Uncle Tom's Cabin*. When an escaping Negro was aided, no record was made; it was not even talked about, for to be discovered aiding an escaping slave was to face prison and the loss of one's property.

The deep religious sense of right prompted Alexander and Mary McBeth to do what they could to aid men and women fleeing from the South. Cellars, caves, and hiding places near the mouth of Yellow Creek were ideal stops on this Underground Railroad.¹

In the Wellsville of 1830 were the wharves along the river, where the stern wheel riverboats tied up to discharge freight. During the daylight hours, the riverfront teemed with activity, but under the cover of darkness were the tension, suspicion, danger, and adventure of the Underground Railroad. The wild recklessness of vice and gambling attendant upon harbor cities and wharf areas gained for this district of Wellsville the name Tophet. The little girls growing up near Tophet often were puzzled by their mother's shocked silence and her whispered reference to the evils of the river men.²

Here by crossroads and by the river ways, Alexander and Mary elected to build their home and to raise their family. The very location of their house, its basement hollowed from the solid lime rock, was deeply to affect the growing children. The kaleidoscopic phases of the river became a part of their lives; the

whistle of a riverboat meant home to them.

Although they lived in the midst of all this exciting world of action, their white frame house with its simple, austere lines was the dwelling of a highly individualistic family, knit together by a deep religious feeling. Alexander read the Bible daily to his children, and conducted their family worship. The old Scotch hymns were sung by all. The Sabbath was kept to the letter of the old law, for in Scotland Alexander was a Seceder. In Wellsville he was in 1833 the first officially elected elder of the Presbyterian Church, which was organized in 1831. He took an active part in building the church in 1834 and remained a ruling elder as long as he lived. The simpler life of the 1840s made families dependent upon their own resources for all their activities. The home with its associations was their center. Socially they were bound to their homes, to their close neighbors, and to their church. A knowledge of the developing West, the challenge of Hawaii and the far reaches of the Orient came to the East and Midwest through sponsorship of the churches. In the Wellsville Presbyterian Church to which he had contributed so much of his time and effort and in the white house he had erected fronting the river at the crossroads, Alexander, by divine guidance, provided his family with a most stimulating background where they would grow up with many activities and with few dull moments.

In Alexander and Mary's busy life, it was natural for Sue, the eldest, to take much responsibility for the younger children. Sue was always small and wiry, but she made up for lack of size with her driving energy and unlimited curiosity. Mary, their mother, had many anxious moments as her brood wandered by the riverside or by the wharves where rough men were engaged in loading and unloading the steamboats from the river. When the river did not beckon, Sue climbed with her followers over the cliffs behind the house to explore the woods beyond, or the reaches of Yellow Creek as it flowed toward the Ohio River.

Alexander grew to have great confidence in his oldest daughter, Sue. He would have rejoiced had she been a son, but life accustomed him to accepting what he had. So, too, did his Scotch Calvinism.³ For her part, even in her early years, Sue became the companion of her father. Although self-reliant and

indomitable, she always understood men and rejoiced in masculine company. Sue had a kindred feeling for her father's devotion to the Presbyterian Church and to their Calvinistic God. Thus Sue with her lively questioning and sharp curiosity was the guide for her sisters and for neighbor children as they pushed their knowledge further and further afield.

Although the forests beyond the bluffs edging the Ohio River were an attraction to Sue and her followers, the river and creek held them enthralled. Especially were they impressed by the rise and fall of the river. There were even times when it flooded the lower parts of their home perched so solidly on its limestone rock. The eager children found much to explore along the riverbanks. Many a time Sue took her sisters with her to dream about ancient Indian carvings on the banks of the Ohio. No one had ever been able to decipher the messages conveyed on these cliffs, and many before and after the McBeth girls had speculated about them.

When the children tired of scrambling over the country or along the wharves, on sunny hot August afternoons, Sue was their story teller. Stories of Indians fascinated her and her friends. At times she imagined she was Queen Aliquippa, the disreputable, but yet alluring medicine woman who had long ago lived farther up the river near Pittsburgh. On other occasions, as she grew older, stories were invented from classical myths and Roman heroes. In all these years Sue, the oldest daughter, was the leader and the protector of the children and of many neighborhood youngsters. As she perched on the great stone step of their home, she was a queen with her subjects. Indeed, nothing pleased her more than to have quarrelsome children stand in awe. She loved pitting her quick wit in lively arguments which she usually won. This trait carried throughout her life for Sue was eulogized after her death as one who was "the terror of careless and unprincipled skeptics" in arguments. In rapid succession, the queen tells them of strong Samson, of Abraham and Isaac, of Aladdin and his wondrous lamp, of Robert Bruce and his glorious battles for the Scots, and of Christian on his pilgrimage to the celestial Jerusalem. Her sources were few enough and time for reading was restricted; however, Alexander secured what books he could for his

children to read.⁴

When plots and stories were exhausted, Sue made up doggerel verses. Like the old Scottish balladists, she urged the others to contribute lines until in time the McBeths were submitting verses to local newspapers.

Thus the days of childhood passed with happy adventure and surrounded by the care of loving parents. Romance and sentiment fill the imagination. Sue said,

If I were not principled against it, I could give myself to writing romances.⁵

But encouraged by her devout father, she had unswerving principles. Sue did not join the Wellsville Presbyterian Church at the expected time because her questioning mind had doubts and misgivings. When she was recovering from a fever at the age of 13, she began to think seriously about the church, but she had no satisfying religious experience at that time. In 1846 the Rev. John M. Lowrie became the pastor of the Wellsville Presbyterian Church, and a friendship soon arose with the McBeths that was to continue as long as they lived. Early in his pastorate in Wellsville, when Sue was 16 she accompanied Rev. Lowrie one Sunday as he went to preach in the nearby Madison Church. On the way to the service the young girl told him of her doubts and misgivings, of her mother's impatience, and of her father's sympathy and understanding. At this Madison Church service, stimulated previously by their conversation and the rural beauty about them, Sue had a tremendous religious experience, an experience akin to that which Jonathan Edwards felt in his upland Connecticut meadow of which he wrote so memorably in his diary. Suddenly she knew the support of God's love. From that moment she was forgiven and saved. It was an intense religious experience, one that was etched in her memory to comfort her in all the trials of her life and that was to give her a finality of assurance about everything she did.

In these ten years, Sue and Kate were closely associated in school. Not only did Sue read all that was locally available to her, but she also delighted in whatever education Wellsville had to offer in the Laverty Academy. The stories of the Greeks and their civilization intrigued her. She became so proficient in Latin that she delighted in imitating Latin verse forms in English. The

doggerel of the queen of summer evenings on the front steps was becoming refined into verses signed "Aliqui" and printed in the Wellsville paper. By their middle teens, both Sue and Kate were reaching for the best education for women that the Ohio River communities had to offer. Hopes for a life of teaching and service rose high. Sue dreamed of converting the Indians or even of more romantic missions to the Pacific of Asia. She was caught in the ferment and unrest of her contemporaries. In New York State, Joseph Smith saw visions and conversed in Arabic with angels. No less intense but more practical, Marcus Whitman and Henry Harmon Spalding were hurriedly finding themselves wives to set forth with commissions to the Northwest. Others were marrying and setting out for Hawaii, China, and India. Surely the older McBeths could dream of mighty adventures in the name of their God who was with them now and close to them. By these services for the Lord, like so many of their contemporaries, they were to be assured of eternal reward.

In 1842, the family in the little white house was rejoicing. Like any family that took so much pride as the McBeths in their Scottish origins and in their religious heritage, they all longed for a boy to carry on the family name. It seemed too much for them to hope, for there were four daughters; however, the two babies that Alexander and Mary had lost had been sons. To the joy of all and to the supreme delight of Alexander, Robert Alexander McBeth was born on January 3, 1842. Alexander felt that like Abraham his prayers for a son and heir had met with God's favor.

Just five years later in 1847 as the sisters hurried happily home after their school day, they were surprised as they rounded the corner toward their home to see several neighbors standing about in their yard and on the porch. As the girls approached the steps, the family doctor appeared at the door with his hat in his hand and shook his head solemnly to the waiting friends. In moments the trembling girls learned their father was dead! Alexander, who had appeared at their morning's family devotions his normal stable self, had fallen dead a few minutes ago while he was laying a hearth stone in a nearby mansion.

The family in the little white house at the base of the cliff was stunned. There followed several days when the older girls and their mother numbed with shock and grief moved through the

necessary ritual of their church. Sue especially felt the tremendous responsibility as her father's eldest. Throughout the hours' long funeral service with its heart-rendingly mournful hymns and eulogies in the Presbyterian church, Sue held her head high in rigid self-control. Even at the cemetery surrounded by many tombstones carved by Alexander himself on the hill in the raw spring wind, Sue maintained her rigid composure. The bereft family after the necessary "funeral repast" provided by kind neighbors and friends for the visiting relatives was alone for the first time in their fatherless cottage. Robbie was sound asleep; the younger girls had finally fallen asleep sobbing quietly. With her family secure and under one roof, Sue slipped out to her loved river alone. Automatically her feet sought the path to her "Aliqui rock," the place from which throughout her childhood she'd reigned supreme. As the tears now racked her slight frame, she realized that with her lost childhood, she had now lost her youth. From this night forth she must be a woman, an unafraid, firm, and self possessed woman to guide her desolate family. In every way possible she must try to take her father's place. There was only One to whom she could turn, her father's God. She looked up to the far away blurred but stimulating stars above, where with complete certainty she knew her father now rested "in the arms of Jesus." Suddenly, there was a rustle near her and there was someone else, who dropped down beside her. The younger Ralston boy put his arm diffidently about her waist, and as Sue turned to bury her grief on his welcome shoulder, he smoothed her hair with an awkward comforting hand. They neither one said much as later he walked her protectively back to the darkened home.

Mary McBeth with her five children, ranging in ages from seventeen to the adored Robbie, now five, did not know where to turn or how to support the family. This sudden heavy responsibility fell on the shoulders of slim, fragile, seventeen-year-old Sue and upon her sister Kate. To be sure, there were many times when these sisters did not agree. Kate had been envious when Sue ruled as the queen and leader of the neighborhood. She enjoyed trying to foment mutinies against Sue's iron will and discipline. Now, in the face of this disaster, the two drew close together to shield their mother and to care for

the younger children. The void to Sue was especially overpowering. As his eldest, she was closely sympathetic with her father. They had shared the wisdom of the Bible, of *Pilgrim's Progress*; and from the poems of Robert Burns they evolved a deep urge for independence and individualism. Indeed, the Scotch home of Mary and Alexander McBeth brought to the Ohio River country many of the aspects of *The Cotter's Saturday Night*.

The second daughter, Kate, three years younger than Sue, had been more closely associated with her mother in the care of the family. Although both Sue and Kate were quick and eager scholars in the Wellsville schools, Sue had a more questioning mind coupled with a relentless ambition. Kate was more practical, more readily sympathetic, and she was gifted with a lively sense of humor in contrast to Sue's grimness. Together these two complemented each other; among the other children Sue assumed the leadership by right of being the oldest. She even liked to pretend she was the little mother of the group. For her part, Kate loved them all and could with all her soul admire and encourage them. Sue was prone to remain on her queenly pedestal. The two together, Sue and Kate, the older McBeth girls, from their early teens made a most effective although not always harmonious pair. Even when they quarreled, which was all too frequently, they realized in their hearts how much they relied on one another. Now was the time of trial indeed for the two sisters. Besides Robbie, there were eight-year-old Elizabeth and eleven-year-old Mary. The ambitious plans that Sue and Kate had made for furthering their own education must now be postponed or perhaps never be attained. In these years only the staunch faith inherited from their father buoyed up the two girls. God's will they accepted without question; it was difficult to understand, but God had his purposes for them, and they trusted Him.

In these critical years Sue, the leader, organized her younger sisters. They established a millinery shop in their home and advertised in the Wellsville newspaper the business they had set up. The girls at home, and the mother, when she could, devoted themselves to making and trimming hats. Sue was tireless in delivering them about the town. Once more the family was

settling down to a new routine as the younger children were growing up. Young Robbie was the focus of attention for his mother and older sisters. Life in Wellsville was never to fall into a rut for the McBeths; there were always new developments.

One of these new developments arose from the growing uneasiness between North and South. In the forties the institution of slavery was becoming stronger and more widespread. Texas and the states plundered from Mexico were falling into the slavery column. Rivalries arose between abolitionists and slave holders in Kansas-Nebraska. All this seemed remote from Wellsville in eastern Ohio, but more and more fleeing slaves were crossing the Ohio River from Virginia to freedom because before 1860 Wheeling and the villages in the panhandle were a part of the South. While Alexander McBeth was still living, the people in his church were sympathetic with escaping Negroes. It was easy to hide them by day near the river, and then by night they were on their way to the Lakes and freedom. The North used to be free, but by Henry Clay's and Webster's compromises in Congress, gradually all the United States was brought under the law of recognizing slaves as property, property with which it was now unlawful for Americans North or South to interfere. The Fugitive Slave Law of 1850 exacted that all Americans must aid in restoring run-away slaves to their lawful owners. To disobey this law of the land was to face long imprisonment and confiscatory fines. It is no wonder that many stories persist about underground railroad activities and that little or no local evidence about aiding fleeing Negroes can be obtained, although it is known that slaves escaped.

Alexander during his life, like all Scotchmen and Presbyterians, felt freedom was the right and law of God. God in his plan had placed the McBeths in the main escapeway of slaves. Thus it was that gradually Alexander made room for hiding away fugitives from the South. After Alexander died, such activities for succoring runaway Negroes were almost impossible for a family reduced to women. However, did not their very circumstances call for them to carry on this mission of their father? A houseful of lone white women would never be suspected of hiding black slaves. After the stringent law of 1850 and its interpretation by the Dred Scott Decision, aiding in the underground railroad was

perilous. Sue with her sharp mind was driven almost to distraction. Kate and her mother took a more fatalistic view. They trusted in their God to save them when they were carrying out His will and He did not fail them; they were never detected in this practical mission of mercy.

In the face of all these duties and excitements there was time for social activities at the Presbyterian church, which faced the river with its busy traffic. Spring, summer, and autumn evenings were hauntingly beautiful. The McBeth girls were not so set apart that they did not make many friends. To be happy Sue had to be with people, and she had to have their praise and approval. Growing up with them at the same time were the boys in the Ralston family. Mrs. Ralston was from Virginia. Her husband had early cast his lot with the shipping on the river and in Wellsville had set up a shipyard and shipfitting business. His sons, William Chapman and A.J., were fascinated and lured by the river front. On many occasions they visited with the McBeth girls, and A.J. Ralston became particularly devoted to them. It was hard to know whether he was more attracted to Sue or to Kate, for many times they all walked together after prayer meeting or church. Many a soul searching talk did they have on entrancing spring evenings by the River. But Wellsville, like so many American towns, was not able to provide a satisfactory future for its most ambitious young men, and therefore the river and their father's business urged the brothers to their destiny. First William Chapman, the oldest Ralston son, like Sue in the McBeth family, took the lead. He found employment with shipping interests on the Ohio and Mississippi Rivers; he settled for a time in New Orleans. From there he went with the thriving traffic of the 1850s to Panama, joined later by his younger brothers. William Chapman Ralston went on the San Francisco, where he made economic and financial history, but A.J.'s lot was to remain for some time in sultry and fever-ridden Panama. Like most midwestern Americans, he did not know any language other than English and if he did, the ways of the *senoritas* in Panama did not attract one of his background. When in lonely isolation he remembered the walks along the Ohio River with the McBeth girls those evenings after church, he deplored the thousands of miles that separated them. Homesick after Christmas and New

Year's in 1853 he wrote to Sue and Kate, January 4:

You may rest assured that there is not that attraction about Panama that would induce me to stay here very long . . .

We cannot here call on the young ladies much whose society is so essential to the real enjoyments of life as we are not conversant in the Spanish language enough to hold conversation. And at any rate the Spanish ladies are so different from our *warm hearted* American ladies that there is no attraction or even a pleasure for us to mingle in their society, providing we were acquainted with their language.

and then to Sue he became more confidential:

Sue I cannot but speak of one sentence in your letter and which I have thought so often about since reading it — that is, concerning the walk which you and I took the Sabbath evening previous to my departure — *indeed I have, often thought of if* — when alone thinking of the 'ones I left behind me' and of the pleasure that I took in attending the weekly prayer meetings and preaching for the Sabbath and hope I shall ever *remain* as then. At least I think there is as yet no change and I shall endeavor to remain with even more firmness than ever. These things however are best to be judged by others. I may flatter myself too much but the desire to do so yet continues . . . Without ado I will close by subscribing my honorable name — and believe me truly yours as ever fervently —

A.J. Ralston

No matter how lonely A.J. Ralston was in Panama, no romance was possible under the conditions prevailing in 1853. Couples either married quickly and went away together to make their homes in distant places, as the missionaries to Hawaii or as the Whitmans and Spaldings did, or the romance faded.

Once the McBeth sisters had determined the proper course of action for themselves, they allowed nothing to interfere. This was especially true of Sue, who despite any delays always sought when she could the objectives determined after careful meditation and prayer. It was all right for a time to aid the family

by taking in sewing and millinery work, but both Sue and Kate had dedicated themselves to teaching and they must secure the education necessary for this calling. For women in the years before the Civil War it was most difficult to gain a competent education. However by the 1840s many academies and seminaries were rising; especially in Ohio and Pennsylvania the female seminary was becoming popular. Ministers were founding female seminaries even in the newly settled regions of Iowa. Perhaps from chivalry, possibly from local pride, many a female seminary was acclaimed the most famous school in the country for the education of young women.

In Wellsville, there was a good academy where Sue and Kate secured their earliest education and to which they returned to take a few courses while they were struggling to maintain their mother and sisters and brother. By 1853, the sisters were attending the Steubenville Female Seminary, where they lived during the school year, since Steubenville is thirteen miles south of Wellsville. In 1853-1854 Sue studied astronomy, chemistry, natural philosophy, composition, scripture, and algebra. Although successful in all these courses Sue won honors in all but grammar and composition. By diligent study Sue was able quickly to absorb all that the Steubenville Seminary could give her and was graduated in 1854. While Kate was completing her education at the Steubenville Female Seminary, Sue was once more living at home in Wellsville and teaching there in the Lavery Academy.

With Kate at Steubenville and with the Ralstons and other friends scattered, life became at times dull in Wellsville for Sue. From her early years, she was a dreamer whose lively imagination created stories even from illegible hieroglyphics. In Sabbath School, stories were frequent accounts about the mission field in Hawaii. The exploits of Whitman and Spalding in Oregon were told and then the news of the cruel massacre at Wai-lat-pu. Sue, like most midwesterners would have been totally insulated from the rest of the world had it not been for activities of the Board of Commissioners of Foreign Missions which supplied the churches with a fund of information for eager young people.

Also keenly imaginative, as well as apprehensive, Sue was fearful of the destruction and ruin of the family in Wellsville if

their underground railroad activities should be discovered. Kate and Sue continually bolstered up each other's courage by reiterating that no snooping official would ever suspect a household of helpless women to be harboring run-away slaves. But both girls spent many sleepless nights with their fears. Only a month ago, one fugitive in his flight at dusk from their cellar hiding place had dropped a powder horn right on their back door stoop.⁶ Just suppose some unfriendly spy or copperhead had found it first and alerted the authorities to watch their premises? No matter if their small unpretentious house did sit off on the northern edge of town, well isolated from neighbors. Anyone with even half an eye could instantly see that their deep, damp cellar almost washed by the Ohio was the ideal hiding place for runaways, on their way from Virginia, just across the river, to Canada and freedom.

Recently the papers had been full of the lawsuit against Mr. Rush R. Sloane of Sandusky for aiding in the flight of slaves. The case had been settled in favor of the slaves' owner and ruinous fines levied against Mr. Sloane. Were such a similar discovery made about the McBeths' illegal doings, they would face complete and certain ruin. Sue convinced herself that without her two courageous-appearing daughters, Mary McBeth would not feel equal to face the tension and responsibility of maintaining the station alone. If Sue and Kate left, their mother would surely be forced to relinquish this highly dangerous cause; she would be forced to give up her insistence that they continue what their father had instituted before his death.⁷

Sue thought more and more of many Ohio friends and acquaintances who were flocking to the new frontiers beyond the Mississippi River. Iowa was easily accessible by sailing down the Ohio River and then up the Mississippi to Burlington or beyond. Of this movement in the fifties, the Rev. J.C. McClintock wrote:

Iowa emigration of the early fifties . . . often took whole colonies out of a neighborhood or church from the lakes to the Ohio through the central states and transferred them to some choice locality in Iowa, where former friends still found themselves neighbors, and in force large enough to plant at once the church they loved

amidst their new homes. So, what was lost at the east was gained at the western end of the line. Iowa was settled by selected stock from the best parts of our land, mainly of American birth and Protestant faith; intelligent people, who appreciated the value of schools; and, what is better, religious people, who brought the church along with them. The first time I looked an Iowa congregation in the face I could count fifty-one persons, old and young, who had come from the same old church back on a Pennsylvania hillside.⁸

Teachers were in great demand in this newly-settled country, for families among the pioneers were large and few resources were available for the founding and nurture of schools. Many a minister after he founded a church in the new community then "flung himself into establishing a female seminary to give the young women of the frontier the opportunity they would have had back home."⁹ The movement to bring teachers to the new lands in the West was accelerated by Catherine Beecher, who with all the forcefulness for which her family was famous, began from her home in Cincinnati to carry on what would later be called a teachers' agency. A Central Committee for Promoting National Education founded under Beecher auspices, advertised through the churches the need for young women teachers. Religion joined with the economic urge to fill this void of midwest teachers; men of the cloth escorted eastern young ladies to schools in Iowa and the West.

When Kate was home for Christmas in 1855, Sue complained, "I wish I could leave all this to carry on God's testimony in India or China. Most of our friends like the Ralstons and McQueens have gone far away. My anxiety lest we be discovered harboring these hordes of escaping black people is shattering my nerves."

"Yes," Kate rejoined, "and your disagreements with mother on how to bring up Lizzie and Robert are not helping your nerves any either."

"Indeed, I have done my share for this family, and they ought to listen to me. In June, *Deo Volente* [sic], you will be graduated from the Steubenville Seminary, and then it is high time you did your part."

"But," parried Kate, "you have the only teaching position

available to a young lady in Wellsville. What can I do?"

"Only yesterday a Christmas letter came to me from Keokuk, Iowa. You remember James McQueen and his wife, who left for the West two years ago?"

"Yes, I remember that they told us the best land in Iowa can be bought for a dollar an acre. It is not sand or clay such as we have around here either, but it is black dirt four feet deep. In Iowa they say the corn grows eight feet tall."

"Jim McQueen writes we ought to come to Iowa. He says whole families of children have no teachers, that it is an obligation to God for Christian young ladies to offer their services."

"Oh, Sue, that reminds me. At school I read a book, 'The Duty of American Women to their Country' written by Catherine Beecher, the sister of Henry Ward Beecher and the daughter of Dr. Lyman Beecher. Catherine Beecher can secure appointments in Iowa for anybody properly trained. All we should have to do would be to write to her."

"Well, I don't know about Miss Beecher's book, but I did see a new book just out of Chicago. Its title is *Iowa As It Is In 1855*. It calls Iowa 'the garden of America.' Apparently there is a great immigration out there right now and some 16,000 more men than young women; it even said 'Let the Yankee girls have the hint.' Now, Kate, there you go blushing, but after all we might as well be sensible. I'm already twenty-five and you're nearly — — —." ¹⁰

"Sue, you do always say everything so bluntly. Of course we have to admit most of the really eligible young men have gone West like the Ralstons and the McQueens."

"There you have it — the McQueens."

"But, Kate, why not ask the McQueens if they do not know of places near them in good God fearing Presbyterian communities where teachers are in demand? You will soon be finished at Steubenville. Why not try this together, or at least near together?"

Some weeks later on one Sabbath in April, Sue made the bumpy trip to Steubenville to attend church with Kate. Aquiver with excitement, Sue read Kate the letter from James McQueen:

Dear Sue,

Your letter about possible teaching opportunities in Iowa came a few days ago. We have been making inquiries and hear from Robert S. Hughes, who used to live in Wellsville, that the Fairfield Female Seminary is about to close for lack of teachers. This school was founded by Father Bell a saintly Presbyterian minister, who has established many new Presbyterian congregations in the Mid-west. You and your sister, graduates of Steubenville Seminary, one of the most noted schools for women in the country, have all the needed qualifications. Not only would it be rewarding to become a part of this western settlement, it would be good for you both to leave Wellsville for a year or so. Why not try this opportunity? It may be it is God's voice calling you both to Fairfield.

Devotedly yours,

Since their arrival from Scotland, the McBeths had not ventured far from the region around the Ohio River between Steubenville and East Liverpool. Teaching in the Fairfield, Iowa, Female Seminary looked like a great venture. In 1856 the journey from Wellsville, Ohio to Iowa took careful preparation and planning. There was much activity in the little white cottage by the river that hot and sultry summer. Prim and proper clothes were to be made and fitted, clothes becoming the dignity and style of proper young ladies about to begin a teaching career. In addition to all these preparations there were the usual hats to design and trim, together with the local dressmaking that the McBeths were doing to support themselves. Mary, their mother, repeated over and over:

"I don't see why you have to go 'way off out West to Iowa, a rough, raw country, many days travel from our home. I shall in all probability never live to see you again. If it is teaching you want, why can't you be satisfied with a place in Mr. Laverty's Academy? He told me he was well pleased with Sue's teaching last year. Most young women who are teaching get married. Soon there will be openings in Steubenville or out east in the Washington, Pennsylvania, Female Seminary."

But when Sue felt that God was urging her to Iowa there was

no argument. And although Kate often resented Sue's forthrightness and her constantly taking the lead, she had been accustomed to follow her diminutive but determined older sister. They all had come to depend upon Sue to make the decisions after the sudden and unexpected loss of their father.

"If Sue must leave us," complained Mary, "at least, Kate, you can stay and help me through. How can you bear to leave our Robbie? He is such a dear little fellow."

Kate burst into the tears which always came quickly enough for her. "Mother, you just do not understand. God does not will that we stay here in our old home. You have heard Rev. Lowrie say that the new regions west of the Mississippi are crying for teachers. Large families need the teaching that we can give. Sister says we must go. Sue even believes that God took Father 'to stir up our home nest, to make us try our own wings.'"

In the 1850s although many were going to the West, it took a good deal of fortitude for young women to leave home. The last prayer meeting in the home church, the final Sabbath with God-speeds and blessings were almost more than Kate could survive. Her eyes were red and swollen much of the time. Sue, however, had not the least doubt nor any regrets over their decision. They were called to Fairfield, and to Fairfield they were going. All these goodbyes were to be endured; they were a part of the rigors of the journey.

CHAPTER 5

AND THEN THE CHOCTAWS

One bright afternoon the two sisters saw their trunks banged aboard a stern wheeled river boat with two tall smokestacks. The gang plank was cast off and they were on their way down the river. Slowly, Wellsville retreated behind them. Familiar landmarks like the cliffs with the old Indian carvings loomed up and vanished. Many stops were made at landings along the way; at Steubenville, Wheeling, West Virginia, and at Portsmouth, Ohio.

When they docked on Saturday at Cairo, Illinois, they had to change boats for one going up the Mississippi to Keokuk, Iowa, where they were to meet the McQueens. Kate rushed up to Sue, "If all our things are safely ashore, I hear we may shortly catch the *River Belle* for Keokuk."

"Sister, would you travel on the Lord's Day and cause these poor river men to work on the Sabbath?"

"But, Sue, lodgings are really dear here, if we have to remain any time. We have only just enough for this trip, as it is. There isn't another boat until Tuesday."

"No matter, McBeths do not travel on the Sabbath; that is settled; it is against God's command."

They left on Tuesday. The loaded boat stopped frequently at many river settlements, even at bare little sand-bar landings. The sisters were fascinated during their longer delay at St. Louis, which was buzzing with activity as the gateway to the growing West and Northwest. Eventually they passed the mouth of the Illinois River, and the Missouri River with its brown, muddy water. Now they were in the clear Mississippi approaching Keokuk and friends from Wellsville. On their right lay Illinois, and on their left beyond the mouth of the Des Moines River was the southernmost point of Iowa and the home of the McQueens.

The McQueens were delighted to welcome them; a new

question stumbled over the last question about everyone and everything "back home in Wellsville." The McBeths spent their first evening in Iowa bringing the McQueens up to date on Wellsville happenings. The men of the family were especially concerned over the political turmoil gripping the nation and shook their heads solemnly during the discussion of the dangers in assisting runaway slaves by the underground railroad. Like the McBeths, the McQueens came from Scotch-Irish Presbyterian forebears. They too heartily endorsed the moral principle that taught the sinfulness of slavery.¹ Although the McQueen family appeared hungry for news of Wellsville, Sue and Kate were both astonished by their shrewd questions about the underground railroad and its effect on the little town they had left in Ohio. From long habit of enforced secrecy, neither girl quite dared catch her sister's eye, nor did either one hazard taking the McQueens into their complete confidence about one of their chief reasons for leaving home. They were now far away from Ohio and the tentacles of the Fugitive Slave Law; they were leaving the past to open a brand new chapter of their existence.

In their turn, Sue and Kate inquired about the Hughes and others who had left Wellsville for Iowa and even farther West. When the talk turned toward the Ralston brothers, W. C. and A. J., now building their fortunes in Panama, Kate was conscious of blushing slightly. Before bed time, plans were made for the long stage journey tomorrow to Fairfield, some seventy miles to the northwest.

As the two sisters bounced along the dry, dusty roads of August, they were somewhat sombered by the dull brown hues. In contrast to the green lawns, cool woods, and maple and elm trees of Ohio, this country with its yellowing, ripening corn, its fewer wood lots had a depressing effect upon Sue and Kate. They were comforted that they were together and not alone. To be sure the dips and rises, with long rolling hills were somewhat like those of eastern Ohio only the hills were gentler and longer. There were no outcroppings of rock or coal to give interesting variety. Iowa in the 1850s was a raw, new country and yet a sturdy country with its farmlands, houses and barns. Dust rose from the horses' hooves, dust trailed along after the stage, and dust covered every inch of their traveling dusters. This Iowa dust was

black dirt, like coal, and they were soon to learn that under normal conditions this soil, the heartland of the United States, was capable of sustaining not only the frugal needs of pioneer settlers but it held the promise for satisfying the future needs of a great country. Kate, with a far closer feeling for the soil than Sue, was the first to realize the great promise in this raw, dusty, new part of the Union.

At last after many weary miles at the foot of a long gently sloping hill lay Fairfield. There in the valley below them was the goal of their hopes and future. It differed much from Wellsville, a long narrow town, stretched serpentine along the Ohio River on a bench, bounded by low, steep hills and bluffs. In contrast, Fairfield, the county seat, was fitted about a central square, dominated by the Jefferson County courthouse. A few dwindling trees were planted haphazardly about the center of town. Late summer dust lay impartially upon everything. The long, low, and ill-fated university building blended into its gray surroundings. The modest new Presbyterian Church, a brighter spot of red bricks, rose a little to the south of the square.

Fairfield was emerging as a south-central Iowa center by 1856. Although its population was only about 3,000, it played at that time a crucial role in state affairs as the center of a fertile farming area. It was served by a Methodist church as well as the Presbyterian church, which had been founded by Launcelot Graham Bell,² who had also established the Fairfield Female Seminary, where they were to teach. In a few weeks, the new teachers sent for their church letters from Wellsville and were formally accepted by the Fairfield church on January 10, 1857. They found this church in Iowa in many ways different from the one they had left in Ohio; but nevertheless, they had much in common with their new pastor, the Reverend Samuel M. McCune. A Pennsylvanian, graduate of Washington and Jefferson College, he too came of staunch "old-country" Scotch descent. The Reverend Mr. McCune had a strong personality, was a powerful and devoted preacher who knew with certainty God's will for his people. He was consecrated to make it prevail at all costs.

By the time the McBeths arrived in Fairfield, the seminary had survived eight years of vicissitudes. Father Bell had founded it in

1848 with a first term of four winter months, based chiefly on his trust and assurance of God's support. The pioneer minister and educator sincerely believed in and practiced living on "The Ravens' Fund"—"By faith went thou out, not knowing whither—nor how — [to get] there."³ For the first few years this system appears to have worked for it was reported in 1851 that

"a full board of teachers carried forward every part of a female seminary education, both substantial and ornamental."⁴

But then troubles set in and the leadership of the seminary changed several times. During his pastorate in Fairfield, the Reverend McCune exerted a strong influence over the seminary, which was the situation when Sue and Kate came. Their agreement was to teach three terms of fourteen weeks each.

Besides the Female Seminary, Fairfield boasted of another institution of learning. Unfettered by old customs and traditions, Iowa was free to experiment. In the same year that the seminary was founded (1848), the state legislature had enacted a law establishing the right of communities to develop branches of the state university, providing state support for such centers. Fairfield as an enterprising town lost no time in securing land for a building. In 1849, an ambitious structure was erected for \$3,000, appropriated by the state. Located to the south of the square, it was a two-story brick building, forty by eighty feet, the exterior plastered with cement. On the lower floor a broad hall ran down the middle separating recitation rooms; on the upper floor were six large rooms in which twenty-four students could live. However, the speed with which Fairfield spent the total appropriation was ill considered. There was the handsome building, but no funds for either furnishings or teachers. A final calamity was the tornado that struck the empty building in 1850, tearing off the roof. In 1853 local citizens pledged another \$3000 to purchase the empty university and its charter. Later this fund was increased to \$10,000 by a private corporation. Besides being in charge of the Female Seminary, the Rev. McCune was a member of the local board of trustees for the university. The first teacher employed by the university was Mr. John Anderson, but like the beginning struggles of the seminary, its career too was spotty and uncertain financially. In these years before the Civil

War, both the university and the Female Seminary balanced precariously on the edge of extermination. Only the zeal of devoted individuals and the desire of the youth and their families to be educated kept them alive through the changing and difficult latter 1850s.

These were the conditions that Sue and Kate found in 1856, when they arrived to teach in Fairfield. Others lacking their devotion and stamina would have left after only a few weeks of frustrated hopes, but they were of sterner and more purposeful metal. The severe winter of 1856-57 was followed by crop failures and great hardship in the region around Fairfield and central Iowa. The poverty of these years was reflected in the desire of both sisters to gain financial security.

As one might have expected from her previous experience and even from her childhood, Sue McBeth became a brilliant teacher. In a time when few women were engaged in higher education, Sue by the force of her intellect and her sound training in classics and mathematics was an outstanding success. This wisp of a girl had from her early youth bullied and exacted recognition from her family and neighborhood children. Now the showmanship of those story-telling days on the porch of the little white cottage by the Ohio River was of incalculable value. Any good teacher must have intellect, imagination, dramatic ability, and force. Sue possessed all four of these resources to an astonishing degree. With training as good as Ohio in those days could offer, she was one of those superb teachers who on rare occasions are born to instruct others. But despite Sue's marked ability and purposefulness, it took the combined courage and effort plus dogged hard work by both girls to maintain themselves by teaching on the Iowa frontier in the 1850s.⁵

Besides Sue's inborn qualities for teaching, it was probably her sense of dramatization that drove her to write many letters, to keep a journal, and to send articles for publication. Her sister Kate, no less emotional, was less given to display and did not consciously seek or attract as much publicity or popularity as did Sue that first year. Kate expressed her feelings more in spontaneous sympathy and friendship for those immediately about her. She was happy during this initial year away from home to be with her elder sister, the leader of the two, but, for the first

time in her life, Kate found herself half-guiltily resenting some of Sue's domination. Kate, too, was a new teacher in Fairfield, but scarcely anyone in town appeared to realize the fact. All the talk was of "Miss McBeth's brilliance." True, Sue was teaching the more advanced group, while "Miss Kate" was left with the younger girls.

At the conclusion of a school day when Sue frequently held listeners around the cleared supper table spell-bound with her amusing and well-told anecdotes, no one showed any inclination to inquire of Kate about her day's experiences. Kate loved her teaching, but she often reflected that hers was a private pleasure. Kate was sensitive because this was her first teaching experience; she had to remind herself that she too was a Steubenville Female Seminary graduate with good qualifications and training. Sue was quick enough to give advice and direction, but Kate secretly wished they could exchange ideas more on the basis as teachers together rather than that of a little sister under the guidance of an older one. After all Kate was now all of twenty-three. In her disturbed conscience, occasionally Kate puzzled over what the Fairfield experience would have been for her without Sue. But then in the next breath she honestly realized that she never would have come alone without Sue, would never have left the "little white cottage" without Sue's urging.

Ashamed of her secret resentment (or was it just plain jealousy, the young sister wondered in her heart), Kate held her self control until the question of their leaving Fairfield arose toward the end of their first summer term. During the spring they were both well aware of the financial straits of the seminary, which was high-lighted by the sudden closing of its sister institution, the university. All year, Kate had been suspicious that Sue had cast ambitious eyes toward teaching in the university. When this avenue of advancement slammed shut in Sue's face, Kate's suspicions were confirmed by Sue's immediate reaction to the event.

Sue added the closing of the university to her other arguments to leave Fairfield: the seminary would be next. Already during the past year, their meagre salaries had not been fully paid because of the serious crop failures plaguing the young

agricultural community. Thrifty Scotch-bred girls as they were, it was humiliating to be forced to ask for "time," even for their bare necessities. Then the older sister with characteristic opportunism uncovered another reason to leave Fairfield. The Reverend McCune and a friend of his, a Reverend David V. Smock, were inspired to re-establish a Presbyterian church in a neighboring town, Sigourney, even a newer, rougher, town than Fairfield. The two men said they needed recruits, and the McBeths were obviously their answer to prayer. In this Sue heartily concurred because she wanted to leave Fairfield anyway. But not Kate, who could not see God's hand in the proposition — Sue said "stubbornly." Kate believed that Sue saw God's plan chiefly because the two men had intimated to her that if the sisters went as founders and pioneers to this new community, arrangements could be made to give Sue "preaching privileges." What an opportunity! Thus Sue's influence would widen beyond a mere school room, her theological discourses and preaching propensities would reach beyond a supper table; they would reach a whole congregation, all for the glory of God! Bitterly Kate wondered, whose glory? But this settled it in Sue's mind; they would teach in the Sigourney public schools.

Kate marshalled all her resources against this proposed change. In the first place, Kate did not relish change for itself as Sue did; they were just becoming established with some good friends in Fairfield, which she was beginning to like as a growing town. Fairfield needed them here, too, even more so now with the university shut down. Besides they knew practically nothing of public schools and from the little Kate did know, she was apprehensive.

And as for Mr. McCune, even though Sue was not exactly enthusiastic about him as a pastor, Kate was positively unhappy over the man and his actions. During the past year Kate had learned more and more of his autocratic direction of the church, the seminary, the university, the town, at least their part of the town. If Sue held firm opinions about God's plans, she was moderate compared to the Reverend McCune, who spoke to his congregation as "God's representative . . . final . . . and authoritative." Kate knew that her young pupils regarded their

minister as "the voice of the Almighty thunder[ing] in his preaching."⁶ She was convinced that his continuing influence could have no effect on her sister except to accentuate her already dangerous tendency toward inflexibility. Here in Fairfield the McBeths had established some measure of freedom of action, but in moving to Sigourney under his auspices, they would be tarred with his brand of rigidity. The McBeths had been brought up accustomed to Calvinistic doctrine, but it had been tempered by their father's "gentleness"; here there was no such moderation, and Kate's natural kindness and common sense revolted. There must be another side, a human side to those persons in town whom Kate now knew as well-intentioned people, who had been publicly persecuted for their misdeeds and sins by the zealous Mr. McCune. One elder had been sessioned for cursing when a cartwheel fell off in the spring mud of the public square; another one was accused by "Common Fame" of selling for meat a hog under deception "since the aforesaid hog had died or otherwise naturally expired previously."⁷ Then there was that poor unwed girl with her baby — well, to Kate all this sessioning was cruel and unnecessary. Some church members were removing their letters to unite with the Methodist church; others were just absenting themselves from divine worship. There were even nasty counter rumors on "Common Fame" against Mr. McCune himself: whispers that he was a copperhead, at least sympathetic to the southern cause. What reason had Sue to believe that such discord would not occur in Sigourney with the two of them in the midst of a vicious church fight? What right did such a man, even an ordained minister of God, have to blast the reputation of another man?

Thus did Kate arrive at the main argument in her heart against the move from Fairfield. Mr. McCune was chiefly responsible for the dismissal of her good friend, the young Mr. Anderson, teaching at the university. Alone and somewhat timid like Kate, John Anderson and she had formed an alliance of silent companionship. One or two evenings after church he had dropped back from the crowd, had drawn Kate with him and had walked home beside her. Not many times but still just lately — the sisters never breathed such ideas to each other, but Kate thought she felt jealous eyes afterwards in the room they

shared. Sue, who scorned men's "attentions," would never understand how Kate might wish to cultivate this interest. More than once when the table excitement and center of interest ebbed around Sue's scintillating discussions, which she always guided toward those subjects most fascinating to her, Kate had raised her eyes to find John's quizzical but sympathetic gaze fastened on her face. Kate fancied that the two of them shared a private sense of humor. At times they were able silently to communicate to each other their mutual amusement, which punctured for them some of the deadly seriousness of the theological discourses. John had told her confidentially that he was inclined to find some means of remaining in Fairfield, but now here she was being dragged away. Kate gave serious consideration to leaving Sue alone in Iowa, to returning to her Ohio home before acquiescing to Sue's decision. But to return to Ohio to what? There were no positions open there; she had at least to support herself and should also be helping those in "the little white cottage." The McBeth pride rose to remind Kate that she couldn't face defeat by admitting to all in Wellsville that she was unsuccessful after only one year of teaching which Sue was pursuing with such zeal. Wellsville could never understand the other reasons.

More than thirty years later as a stolid middle-aged woman out in the wilds of Idaho, Kate recalled bitterly and vividly that second Thanksgiving spent "in Fairfield [when] I was swollen eyed . . . for we left for Sigourney the next day."⁸ The session records show that they were dismissed by letter from Fairfield and accepted on January 23, 1858, into the struggling little Presbyterian congregation in Sigourney with a handful of other charter members. They now learned that the two proselyting ministers had not stopped with revitalizing the Sigourney congregation. They had moved farther into the country where a group of Scotch-Irish lived, the Little Scotland settlement. Here, no doubt, is where Sue had "preaching privileges"; occasionally she supplied the pulpit in Sigourney in the absence of Mr. Smock.

Sue insisted during that hard winter of 1857-58 that they ought to thank God for the opportunity to teach in any school, even the difficult Sigourney school. The sisters were far from home and

had no reserve. Although there was little money in central Iowa, they should feel fortunate to be able to fill the urgent need for teachers and for church workers simultaneously. Of the two sisters Sue was more colorful and venturesome, but Kate had the sounder, down-to-earth, practical business sense. With almost nothing to invest, they managed to buy several quarter sections of rich Iowa farm land for about \$100. It was probably on the advice of Kate that they also bought lots on the Sigourney public square, which they later sold as well as the farm land at a good profit.

Little is known about the teaching of the McBeth sisters in Sigourney, though newspaper records show they were there. In the meagre reports about the Sigourney schools of 1858, the conduct of unruly children is especially noted, giving evidence of Kate's worst fears. Among the children it was considered great sport to push the outhouses to the bottom of the schoolhouse hill, an outrageous embarrassment to the two proper maiden girls. The Reverend D.V. Smock, who had been partially instrumental in persuading them to come, added to his clerical duties by becoming the county superintendent soon after they arrived. Years later, in 1911, his daughter-in-law, the wife of Finley, the proverbial "preacher's kid," wrote to Kate identifying herself as then "a blind old lady . . . [who] became the wife of Finley H. Smock, the boy who annoyed you so much in the Sigourney School" and told Kate that "among my cherished possessions is a letter from you in '58."⁹

Ironically at the end of their first year, after Sue had gloried in her "preaching privileges," she was called back by Fairfield University, where she had wished to teach the year before. And again Kate had no other place to go. Once more she was beginning to put down roots in the new community, and with Sue gone she now felt she might have a chance to establish her own way of life. Because of the still desperate need of teachers in Iowa, by Sue's resignation Kate was promoted to the boys, a position of more status and more trouble. After two more years of battling the continuing rowdyism rampant in the schools of Sigourney, Kate finally succeeded in securing an appointment back home. It was in the public schools of Wellsville for which her old principal, Mr. Lavery of the seminary, had

recommended Kate because of her experience in Iowa. At least, thought Kate, children brought up in the more staid society of Ohio couldn't possibly be the rough-necks who had made her last three years miserable on the frontier. Kate was overjoyed to escape Sigourney under face-saving reasons; she'd been in Iowa now four years, gaining invaluable experience. Moreover, her younger sisters were now planning to be married and leave home. All their Wellsville friends would recognize Kate's duty in returning to be with her mother. Always devoted to her mother's welfare, Kate remained in the general Ohio home vicinity and across the river in nearby Pennsylvania the next twenty years of her life.¹⁰

When Sue returned to the reopened university in Fairfield in the fall of 1858, after its one year of being closed, she found it reorganized under the leadership of the Rev. Andrew Axline, a Lutheran minister. On April 15, 1859, public examinations were given to the university students. Sue McBeth had taught during the past year plane trigonometry, the first class in arithmetic, the fourth class in arithmetic, Biblical history, and Latin grammar. Her pupils made such a good impression on the audience that the LEDGER recorded:

We rejoice, too that he [Axline] has secured the services of Miss McBeth. She is too well known here to require any recommendation from us, as to her capacity. A regular graduate of one of the best first female seminaries of the country, endowed by Nature with patience, perseverance and every other qualification necessary to make up the perfect teacher — kind in manner — firm in Government — thorough in discipline. Add to this an enlarged experience in imparting instruction, and may we not congratulate the Principal on such an acquisition to his core of assistants.¹¹

While Sue still glowed with this renewed teaching success in the fall of 1859 a Mr. Junkin came to urge Sue to accept a call to the Choctaw Mission of the Presbyterian Church. Sue's immediate reaction written in her diary was:

"Oh! no, I do not need to go among the Indians to work for Jesus, I can find more than I can accomplish here. Please tell Dr. L (Lowrie) I cannot go at present."

After Mr. Junkin had gone however,

Once again in my own quiet room I walked to the window . . . it was a very lovely picture that met my eye. The beautiful western town with its tasteful homes standing back from the broad streets amid flowers and shrubbery. The park, with its pleasant walks and shade trees, the church spires outlined against the sky, the University on a rising ground on the edge of the town, while beyond and around as far as the eye could reach, stretched the undulating prairie, dotted with white farmhouses and carpeted with its brilliant colouring of autumn flowers. Then, as sounds of music and dear familiar voices came floating up through the halls, my thoughts came back to the friends whose love made life's labours so light. Could I leave them to live among the scarce civilized tribes of the forest? And yet who left a home in heaven for me — left His seat upon the throne of the universe to die for sinners? Was the servant above his Master? Might not the interview just closed be a call from Him? and I had decided and refused without even asking His will. If the call had been to go to India or China, I would have thought less of it, but the American Indians, a race in whom I had always felt such a deep interest. How could I slight their claim?¹²

Even as I stood there pondering the subject, there came before me the memories of days when I had played upon the banks of the beautiful Ohio River which flowed before my childhood home. How distinctly I remembered sitting upon the huge rocks on the shore and examining the hieroglyphics, traced, as was supposed, by the red men when their tribes possessed the land. I recalled the deep sympathy I felt for the vanished race and longed to be a woman that I might go to the handful that yet remained and tell them the story of Jesus . . . Now I was a woman, the call had come and I had refused. 'But I have so much work I can do for the Master here, I do not need to go so far to seek it,' said the flesh. 'Fifty could be found to take your place here, to one willing to go to missionary grounds,' urged the

inward monitor, 'and there is such great need for labourers in the field.' More and more distinctly . . . came the conviction that . . . it was my duty to go and labour with them for the Master.¹³

And thus with the conclusion of the spring term in 1860, Sue once more interrupted her teaching in the rural atmosphere of Fairfield to fulfill the call to the Choctaw Nation. She left torn between reluctance and duty, little knowing all the adventures that lay before her.

The very trip to the Choctaw Reservation was an adventure, but despite her frail build, Sue was never one to refuse excitement. Communications in 1860 were ill organized and time consuming. Sue soon discovered the truth of Dr. Lowry's letter of instructions:

It may be necessary for you to travel without an escort, so that your independence will be put to the test at once; it will be for you to determine whether you can go alone.¹⁴

In the spring as soon as the ice went out on the Mississippi River, Sue, after a brief farewell visit with McQueens in Keokuk, left by steamboat for St. Louis, then on to Little Rock, Arkansas, where she stopped for another visit. From Little Rock she travelled again by boat to Fort Smith on the Arkansas River. She could have continued farther by boat, which would have made the trip both easier and less expensive, but this she refused to do since it involved Sabbath travel. The 1860 season was so dry and the river so low that this Sabbath delay necessitated a long overland stage trip from Fort Smith to Wapanacka. This week long trial in the heat and the dust with evil and disgusting companions was a shocking experience to the Ohio bred lady of propriety.

Sue, unaccustomed to such hardships in travel, was greatly fatigued and depressed by the long stage trip. When she finally reached her destination, the Goodwater Mission, on May 14 with her trunk and guitar, she was so disillusioned about the whole venture that she wrote in her quaint third person style affected in her communications with the Board:

If she is very good and works hard, could he not send her to Syria, Japan, China or some of those eastern fields?"¹⁵

The conditions of the Choctaw Mission in 1860 were enough to try the patience and endurance of far more sophisticated

workers than Sue McBeth fresh from her successful teaching in Iowa, even inspired as she had been since her youth with romantic dreams about Indians.

The Choctaw Mission had been established by the American Board of Commissioners for Foreign Missions in 1818, before the removal of the Choctaw Nation to Arkansas and Oklahoma. Its earlier years were assailed by fever, disease, and problems of transportation. Affairs were made worse by the removal of many of the tribe to Indian Territory. The issue of slavery disrupted the Mission, for the Choctaws were landholders and like their white neighbors in the South they owned slaves to aid in the cultivation of their crops. Two years before Sue arrived, in 1858, the 49th Annual Report of the Board outlined the problems of the missionaries to the Choctaw Nation. Hostility is open:

by the enemies of the Board and of the Mission our brethren are charged with what are called, in those regions, the dangerous doctrines of abolitionism. At the same time they are charged, in other quarters, with the guilt of silence in the presence of great and hideous wickedness.

Reports by special committees of the Board were discussed at length and finally tabled; this was the fate of the motion to dissolve the mission.¹⁶ The Choctaw Mission was located two hundred miles from Gaines Landing on the Mississippi, four miles from the Texas border. A further complication was the great drought that beset this area in 1860. This drought that had made necessary Sue's long journey overland by carriage brought great suffering over the entire Southwest.

Upon her arrival at Goodwater, Sue found the mission family to consist of the Reverend George Ainsley, his ailing wife, and three young children. There were, in addition to Rev. Ainsley, three spinster missionary teachers, two women in the kitchen and forty-five Indian girls ranging in age from six to twenty. Sue described the furniture of her quarters as the roughest sort. Lizards, scorpions, and ticks complicated the problems of living. The adjustment was understandably distressing. Her miserable cabin on the edge of a wood was a place of desolation and loneliness. Of the Sabbath she wrote, "Mr. A. [Ainsley] preached, oh how I longed to hear Mr. McCune for an hour or a

day."¹⁷ She was depressed over the loss of "pulpit-privileges" which she had enjoyed in Little Scotland and Sigourney and knew she could have exercised them with much more forcible effectiveness than the Rev. Ainsley.

For days in the summer of 1860, the temperature hovered around 110. The prolonged dry heat brought many of the Choctaws to the verge of starvation. Rude Texans came to interfere with religious services and to heckle the missionaries whom they accused of having been sent by "Satan Seward." It added to her low spirits, when Sue discovered that some of the Choctaw girls had stolen her belongings.

No doubt this time of trial and Sue's attempts to adjust to it were maturing lessons. Though of a keen and dour imagination and of a very apprehensive and nervous temperament, Sue struggled to maintain self control over the expression of her feelings in public. In her teaching she found her salvation. Her assignment was to teach the older girls and to conduct the Sabbath School.

I have a very pleasant school usually, with no more trouble at least, if as much as I should probably have with the same number of white children [shades of Sigourney?], and I think I could not be among those I loved more dearly. Some of the older girls are a real comfort, and help me, and the little ones are docile and affectionate. But, human nature is the same everywhere, and it will show itself at times even in the Indian country.¹⁸

After Sue's arrival in April there were only about six weeks remaining of school before the 1860-61 session closed on June 29. Sue was left to suffer with the heat, inactivity, and loneliness for the rest of the summer. She gradually became accustomed to Mr. Ainsley's preaching which was in English and given to the Choctaws by an interpreter. The unusually hot dry summer dragged on with little except church activities, weddings, and drying apples to occupy Sue's time. To keep her active mind busy she began collecting information for a projected history of the Choctaw Mission and wrote home to Wellsville regularly. During this summer of 1860, her spirits reached their lowest ebb, so that Sue welcomed September with the resumption of the

school term, when she could throw herself into her teaching again.

She was appalled at the shortage of food and the suffering caused by the severe heat, but soon she was occupied with plans for Christmas, a season that she dearly loved and one that the McBeths observed much more joyously than many of the more strict Calvinists of their time.

After the summer's experiences, Sue felt like an old-timer on the mission staff, and was faced with more and more internal problems of the school. Two of her students ran away and some of the girls were "evil and thieving." Sue deplored the Indians' jealousy of each other and their greed for land acquisition. However, she found herself particularly attracted to "the good Betsy and Judith."¹⁹ In this Sue showed a tendency to give special attention to the more gifted or perhaps more cooperative students, a characteristic of her teaching which became more pronounced as she grew older.

Still more overwhelming even than the school difficulties, after the New Year of 1861 the political turmoil intensified to its ultimate crisis. Sue had always been apprehensive about the Texans and southern sympathizers. The War Between the States developed with surprising slowness. Distances were great and communications poor. When news of Sumter came to the mission school at Goodwater, the Texan ruffians became an increasing menace. Sue knew that the American board considered the Choctaw Mission an impossible enigma, because the missionaries themselves were torn between northern and southern sympathies. A definite and acceptable solution of the question of slavery could not be formulated at Goodwater among those working there. As spring advanced, Sue's anxieties increased until in June she decided to return home. The Goodwater Mission was crumbling, and Sue considered the position of the missionaries there no longer tenable. She felt she had remained on the field as long as it was possible, and thus for the first time "she fled for her life."

Historical knowledge of the trying days of June and July, 1861, would hardly justify the assumption that an Ohio girl's life was in jeopardy in Arkansas and Oklahoma. Nevertheless, it was a time of high tension for the nervous, high strung Sue, who was

convinced that she was in critical danger. Hostilities between North and South developed sporadically. Individuals hesitated about what stand to take, and this hesitation was even more marked in the decisions of great states and vast reaches of territory. The religious leaders of the nation, members of the American Board of Commissioners for Foreign Missions, drawn from all sections of the country were themselves badly split over their personal interpretations of Christian morality and the issue of slavery.

Only nine months after her arrival at the Goodwater Mission, Sue wrote Dr. Wilson in Philadelphia:

Let me tell you — I am constitutionally afraid of lightening!

Every very bright flash affects me something like a shock from a Galcanic battery — and yet I cannot remember of ever once shutting my eyes — covering my head, or lighting a candle to shut out the dreaded flash. On the contrary, I am impelled to draw the curtain aside and place myself where I can best see it as it comes. Shrinking and quivering it may be, but none the less resolute in this — So in other things. I have much less courage when I think something is concealed than if I can see the danger in its full force . . . Can He draw aside the curtain from the political storm in the land and predict what it will do for Choctaw missionaries?²⁰

By June thoroughly alarmed by the whole chaotic political and religious confusion among the Choctaw Indians and their missionaries, Sue was not able to "draw the curtain aside" to "see the danger in its full force." She was a badly-scared young woman because "something is concealed." There was grave doubt about passage north on the Mississippi River, but she left soon enough to avoid the inevitable blockade. She was fortunate to arrive in Cincinnati early in July and was home in Wellsville before the first Battle of Bull Run, when the Mississippi blockade went into effect.

Soon after reaching home Sue wrote Rev. John M. Lowrie, her childhood pastor in Wellsville, that God's will was hard to understand, for although the Rev. Ainsley and a few others remained, ultimately the Goodwater Mission was broken up.

She stressed that she had taught in the mission a scant fourteen months. She asserted that she loved her Choctaw girls and found it difficult to leave them. "I reached Goodwater April 14 [May was the correct date] 1860 and left it June 12, 1862." [July 9, was the correct date.]

Sue did not remain long with her family in Wellsville, where she and Kate had their first reunion since their trying year together in Sigourney, three years ago. On August 8, 1861, the FAIRFIELD LEDGER carried the following advertisement of the Fairfield University:

It is with pleasure that we also announce to the public that Miss Sue McBeth will again resume her duties with the Institution at the commencement of the next session. Her qualifications and success as a teacher are well known and need no comment.

Perhaps Sue did not know any more than the readers of the LEDGER that within the next month, September 1, the Rev. Andrew Axline would be commissioned as a chaplain in the Northern Army. So when she returned to Fairfield, the main burden of the university fell upon her shoulders. Except for this new and added responsibility, Sue did not seem to have deviated from the former way of her life in Iowa. It is probable that as soon as she was free from the tensions of Goodwater, she sought and welcomed the former scene in which she had been a great success.

In 1861 Fairfield University was still housed in its original building erected by the state in 1849. According to the advertisements in the LEDGER, the college year now consisted of forty weeks, divided into two sessions. The usual curriculum of the time was offered: Latin, mathematics, philosophy, anatomy, and music. Daily chapel and Sunday services were required. Sue reached the apex of her success as a teacher in the early Civil War years in Fairfield University. Her "queenly bearing" impressed her students as well as her "efficiency as a teacher," and of course, her "exalted moral and Christian character."²¹

The impact of the War Between the States was slow in coming to central Iowa. The FAIRFIELD LEDGER was filled with articles about the activities of Congress, and politics was a major concern. It was only slowly that the reality of war dawned on

Fairfield. For the first three months of the war, devoted mothers, wives, and sweethearts in the community spent endless hours cutting, measuring, and sewing uniforms for their absent soldier boys. What a blow to their pride to learn that instead of the appreciation they had anticipated for their efforts the uniforms had been promptly rejected, even stamped into the mud! All because they had been made from warm, serviceable, hard wearing gray material! Such disorganization as this ruled in a tremendous burst of patriotic zeal when everyone wished to do something. With the Indian wars well in the past, for a generation the Iowa people had known nothing of armed conflict, and they did not know how to focus their endeavors to practical wartime objectives. Sensitive, educated people, always seeking to avoid the bloodshed and suffering of war, tried with all their hearts to find a peaceful solution. The Reverend Samuel C. McCune, again Sue's pastor, was one of these. He even dared to preach against the taking up of arms and was accused of being an advocate of states' rights. At last his old ally, "Common Fame," turned against him when he was said to have visited surreptitiously the office of a well-known copperhead in town.²²

On May 24, 1861, Miss Helen F. Pelletreau, "late of Xenia, Ohio," who had come in 1858 to teach in the Fairfield Female Seminary, "a very estimable young lady" at an impressive ceremony made a speech and presented a special flag from the proud town to its Company E of the Second Iowa regiment. It was this Company E that was decimated in the famous charge the next February, 1862, on Fort Donelson. When the home town casualty lists began arriving in Fairfield, Mrs. M.E. Woods left in answer to Dr. C.E. Clark's desperate cry for nurses to care for "the victims of the carnage." She was Jefferson County's "trusted agent" to their wounded and suffering men, boys no longer. Now the small town and its neighboring farm areas appreciated intimately in each of its sorrowing homes Sherman's famous definition of war.²³

Sue McBeth, again alone without any of her family, since Kate was home with their mother, was now much more self-reliant after her Oklahoma experiences. She succeeded for another year after the Fort Donelson "carnage" to devote her energies to teaching and to administrative affairs in the university. But while

others were mourning the death of loved ones, Sue's heart was deeply concerned over the state of sin of many, if not most, of these soldiers who were meeting death. How could she stay calmly teaching in Fairfield when sinful men were dying and going to their everlasting punishment, unrepentant? Was it not her Christian duty to try to help redeem these souls for their eternal glory?

Torn by her own conscience, with the nation in a tempest of high emotion and fear, during the summer holiday of 1862, Sue returned to Sigourney. She was "so surprised and grieved" to find

such open and universal profanity of wickedness — I sometimes felt as if it was my duty to stay there if I could have only food and clothing and try to oppose my little influence to stem the torrent of evil, and yet what could I do? Our little church as about died out . . . Mr. Hall is too much engrossed in the war to attend to the church as he used to . . . Seth H. has gone to war.

While she was there,

Lizzie W. [Woodin] and Sue [went] into the barracks, to that wild wicked company and respectfully they listened as Sue talked to them and how they promised to read and try to obey the precepts of the blessed book²⁴

For one as imaginative and as emotional as Sue, with the casualty lists increasing in the LEDGER and personal accounts of the physical and spiritual suffering among the wounded, Yanks and Rebels alike, trickling through from the Jefferson Barracks in St. Louis, Sue finally had to "go herself." She was one of the earliest feminine members of the United States Christian Commision when she left her teaching in Fairfield for the third and last time and joined the war effort in January, 1863.

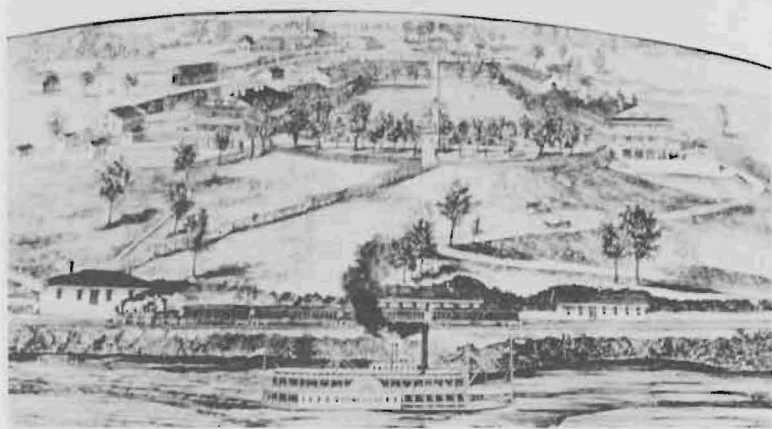


Fig. 2 The Jefferson Barracks at the time of the Civil War (Morrills).



Fig. 3 Wallowa Lake, Oregon.



Fig. 4 Kamiah, Idaho (Morrills).

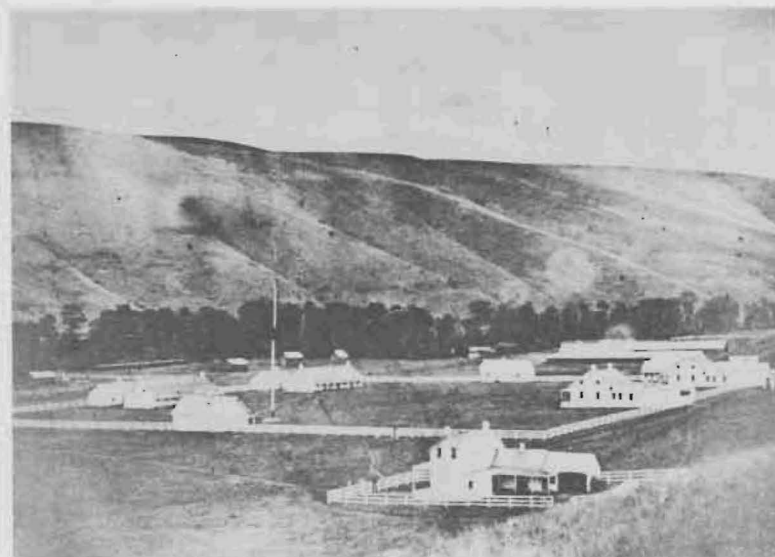


Fig. 5 Fort Lapwai in the early days.



Fig. 6 Nez Perce encampment at Lapwai, 1905.



Fig. 7 Nez Perce camp at Lapwai, 1905.



Fig. 8 Chief Joseph, July 4, 1904, at Nespelem, Washington.



Fig. 9 Parade of Indian women, Lapwai.



Fig. 10 McBeth house and school at Kamiah (Morrills).



Fig. 11 Robert Williams.



Fig. 12 Archie Lawyer.



Fig. 13 Kate McBeth with Nez Perce women.



Fig. 14 The first missionary society in Idaho, January 8, 1891, by the McBeth cabin (photo by Jane Gay).



Fig. 15 Nez Perce ceremonial dance.



Fig. 16 The McBeth cabin at Kamiah. Left to right by door: Alice Fletcher, Joe Briggs, and Jas. Stewart (photo by Jane Gay).



Fig. 17 Reverend Mark Arthur and family. His son Daniel and Rachel, his wife, holding the children,



Fig. 18 Nez Percés at meal time. A rare photo of the inside of a tipi, about 1900.

CHAPTER 6

THE REBEL HEART

The War Between the States did not overwhelm Sue with a blind emotional reaction. She remained analytically intellectual, evaluated the greatest evils, and sought a place where she could do the most good. Fairfield was by no means unique in its early innocence about the true nature of the conflict that now gripped the nation. Except for minor local Indian uprisings and the border skirmish with Mexico, the present generation knew practically nothing first hand of the actual ravages, deprivations, and sufferings accompanying a major war. Few understood the logistics of total mobilization necessary for armed conflict. One of the worst confused areas was hospital care for the wounded; through infection, neglect, and inadequate staff thousands died unnecessarily.

Sue had read the shocking accounts in the Fairfield LEDGER from Mrs. M.E. Woods, who had gone as a nurse and sanitary agent to work in the neighborhood of St. Louis. This city, located in a border state, was in 1863 a crossroads between North and South, East and West. Thousands of troops passed through Jefferson Barracks, just twelve miles south of the city: new recruits zealous in their northern convictions; veterans, wounded, ill, disillusioned, returning crushed from the battle fields; sullen, bewildered prisoners. All were human beings, displaced and stranded in an alien experience, needing Christian solace and guidance. Chaos prevailed in the barracks, and in the improvised hospital facilities suffering and death went largely unattended by the overburdened and often incompetent medical staff. St. Louis, so recently a raw pioneer, out-fitting town itself, was in no way prepared to cope with the sudden influx of people and activity the war had dumped upon her puny resources.¹ Every kind of help was lacking. A most acute need was to bolster the morale of the homesick going-out and



coming-back soldier "boys." The Fairfield paper was filled with stories of anguish and despair from St. Louis, the nearest war center to southern Iowa. Friend repeated to friend horrifying details that never reached print.

When northern citizens in Chicago became aware of this lack of Christian and humane care, they gathered at the new Y.M.C.A. to establish the United States Christian Commission. Its original purpose was to maintain ministers of mercy as messengers of the Christian faith. The early commissioned workers were at first all men, who volunteered their services at their own expense to labor in barracks, hospitals, and prisons. These delegates were chiefly ministers who could meet the requirements of membership, "in good standing" of an evangelical church, possessing piety, patriotism, good common sense, and plenty of energy and courage. They were supplied with pocket testaments, memorandum books, pencils, and other writing materials to assist soldiers in writing home or sending a final sad message to loved ones. The first men delegates were in the field by May 1862, and although many women had been working feverishly from the beginning of hostilities, they were not organized until about a year later. Sue therefore arrived at the Jefferson Barracks some five months before "ladies" were officially recognized as a unit in the "Ladies Christian Commission."²

Undoubtedly Sue was one of the pioneers in the establishment:

A prominent and somewhat peculiar feature of the operation of the St. Louis Branch . . . was the employment of lady delegates or missionaries . . . as attendants in reading rooms, visitors in hospitals, doing whatever their quick sympathy and ready hands found to do for the bodily and spiritual comfort of the men.³

Sue's first service was working in the steaming, crowded, ill-equipped kitchen under the efficient and capable direction of Mrs. Annie Wittenmyer, also of Iowa, who was working out a plan in St. Louis for the Special Diet Kitchens which she ultimately put into effect as General Superintendent all over the North. Sue struggled to adjust to this completely different life, a rigid system of unheard-of hours amid uncongenial domestic

duties and surroundings.

It was within the first month after her arrival in St. Louis that Sue received a letter from Ohio telling her that a cousin, Dr. Eben Law, was reported to be a Confederate prisoner of war at Alton, not far away across the Mississippi in Illinois. With comparatively few relatives in the country, the McBeths had always welcomed any contact with the remotest member of their families, but the Laws were different. Here was someone, the son of her mother's sister, a Rebel prisoner, who might need her help, and yet as sister Kate wrote: "Imagine, Sue, a Rebel in our own family!"

Well did Sue recall the only other time she remembered Eben: sixteen years ago now, at the time of her father's sudden death. In the numb bewilderment of her seventeen-year-old grief, feeling the sudden load of responsibility for her mother and younger children, Sue would never forget the comforting assurance Eben had brought her. Her mother had often told her daughters of that first struggling summer after their move to Wellsville, when her older sister with the young Law family had come to stay with them until they could find a likely location. How the little house had bulged with cousins, inside and outside, until the coming of the chilly weather had crowded them all indoors on top of each other. Alexander McBeth had never been as communicative about the Laws' prolonged visit as his wife, and over the years Sue had gained the distinct impression that her father and his brother-in-law had found the crowded living conditions very trying with both their wives expecting new babies soon. After that the two families had never visited back and forth freely.

Beyond occasionally shared family letters, the McBeths and the Laws had little knowledge of each other until Alexander died. Then Eben, who was in the north at the time, unexpectedly appeared, a good-looking young man of twenty studying to become a doctor. Under any other circumstances such a likely appearing young man would have created a good bit of a stir in Wellsville, but coming as the representative of his family to his uncle's funeral, Eben had conducted himself with southern charm, decorum, and dignity. Sue had seen little of him during those bewildering days for he had stayed with the Ralston family. But she distinctly remembered both the Ralston boys

saying afterwards that they thought him an upright young man, a fine Christian. Sue did hope he hadn't changed too much.

Having decided that it was clearly her duty to call on Eben, Sue lost no time. Most fortunately last September Colonel Jesse Hildebrand, commanding the 77th Ohio Regiment, had been put in charge of the Alton Garrison. As a native Ohioan, Sue wrote him requesting a Christian Commission permit to visit a relative; she was grateful for her Commission status that brought a prompt reply with the permit. Now she found that the trip to Alton was something of an expedition involving more expense than the \$2 round-trip passage fare. The packet STEAMER EAGLE left St. Louis at two each day, taking practically all afternoon to reach Alton up river. Even though her Commission Permit gave her special concessions beyond the restricted prison visiting hours, Sue had to stay over two nights because the return trip to St. Louis left Alton at "½ past 7 o'clock" each morning.⁴

The next hurdle was to make arrangements at the barracks for her absence and to write Eben of her plans. His cordial reply — it seemed eager to Sue — encouraged her. It was not hard to convince herself that here was one of the Scotch "kin folks" who needed her. She had to keep a firm grip on her resolution to bolster her courage to walk alone up to the formidable, gray stone-walled gloomy pile of a prison, jutting up above the river bank. Although the conditions at the Jefferson Barracks were bad, according to all the accounts she'd heard from up the river at Alton, everything was much worse there. Quite unspeakable, it was rumored. Only two months before, late one gloomy November evening the night sky to the north had glowed with the Alton fire. It had been set by prisoners as a cover for their long-planned escape through a tunnel. This had substantiated the worst of the "Common Fame" talk: those men were so desperate that they were willing to take any risk rather than remain in the living hell of those grim walls. Even fifteen years ago Sue had read the shocking revelations of the rat-infested dungeons that Dorothy L. Dix had found. The notable prison reformer after her investigations at Alton had reported that it was "a scene of many horrors . . . filthy and unfit to keep" any human being.⁵ After being briefly closed as a state prison in 1860, it was now once more open to receive rebel prisoners. But they

were human beings too! Was the hospital still in the damp basement with neither light nor ventilation where the floor was flooded in rainy weather like this year? Would Eben be kept in such a hole?

All these forebodings whirled through Sue's mind as she waited nervously in the outer prison office at Alton. In the dim eerie light of a raw January morning she hoped that her professional facade concealed her inner trembling. After all it wasn't every day that a young lady called to see a prisoner. When the clanging rusty old door opened, Sue was totally unprepared for the gaunt but blond Scot who towered over her. As she looked into his direct and unflinching blue eyes, Sue was suddenly tongue-tied. This was not the humble, dejected prisoner she had half-expected. She should have never so underrated the family spirit and courage. Eben took her extended hand in both of his, held it tightly while he said, "Oh, Sue, how good of you to come! How did you manage it? It's been so awful — but here do sit down, we must talk every minute we have. You look so white, are you all right?"

Much of the day Sue managed to spend with Eben, but in retrospect it seemed only a few short moments. When Eben's tall figure disappeared down the hall behind the clanging door again, Sue realized she had not even begun to say or to ask so many things she had carefully planned to talk about. Early the next morning as the boat pulled away from the Alton dock in the foggy mist, Sue still felt dazed. She sat dumb and lost, lost in feeling the most wonderful glow she'd ever experienced. Everything about her appeared in a golden haze. Was this choking sensation, this inability to talk fluently, love at first sight? Is this what the Bible meant by God is Love? Could it really happen like this to her, a woman, yes, practically an old maid now at thirty-three? The questions were still whirling unanswered in her head when she alighted in mid-morning at the Barracks to resume her hospital routine.

In the next few days, Sue was amazed at herself; sometimes she wondered if she was living a second existence quite outside her ordinary, work-a-day self. Her life seemed suddenly out of focus. Even in the midst of her most earnest devotions Eben's high-cheek-boned face would float out of nothingness before

her eyes. Every feature was so clear and vivid, his sandy complexion, even the little wrinkles around his eyes. She felt again the pressure of his strong hands as they covered her small one. The third day there was a letter from Eben; Sue trembled as she touched it. Each word burned into her heart — proper, correct, stilted Victorian phrases of a stranger (fit for the censor's eyes), but to Sue each word held special significance. Didn't he perhaps mean more than might appear? At least there was no question about his wanting her to return. Perhaps she shouldn't go so soon, but then he too was a casualty of the war, as much as any of those here in the Barracks to whom she was devoting her life. She had seen the hurt in his deep blue eyes. The women in the kitchen, everyone working at the barracks, all told each other repeatedly: "You have to get away from this place once in a while — at least on your day off; you have to leave it all behind or you'll go crazy with this suffering and heartbreak around you all the time, never getting away." Of course they were right; Sue would take her time off and go over the river again to Alton.

For three months Sue made the trip to Alton in cold and slush and sometimes freezing weather, but she never disappointed the waiting Eben. When he told her that he lived from one visit to the next, she believed him because they had become the high light of her own existence. She tried to store up little anecdotes to tell him, to give him glimpses of her world. As she became better acquainted with the authorities at Alton and they with her, she was allowed other special privileges. She brought books for Eben to read, which they discussed earnestly together and during the long evenings of their separation they wrote long discourses to each other that the reading suggested, probing the other's thoughts. The prison food was wretched, scanty, unbelievably bad, even worse than at Jefferson Barracks, so soon Sue was skimping herself to bring Eben some favorite bit to vary his monotonous and insufficient diet. While she remained on the kitchen force, sometimes from their supplies she secured for her "special prisoner" a bit of green vegetable or fruit. Sue confided to Eben her lack of domestic arts and her frustration performing kitchen duties which she knew others could do far better. No matter how sincerely she agreed with Mrs. Wittenmyer that the food from the barracks' kitchen was not fit

for ill and wounded soldiers, she still knew her talents would be more useful in the barracks and hospitals as a religious worker.

Eben himself earned respect and some extra leniency as a professional, educated man. Doctors were desperately needed; there were no extra ones to spare from the battle fields, and the prisons were sadly understaffed. Eben's medical competency was quickly recruited; his conscientious care of invalids, his willingness to use what was on hand, to "make do" however best he could, won general appreciation. Soon Eben was coming and going about the prison building "on parole," and even beyond in the town.⁶ This freedom of movement gave him and Sue much more privacy in their visits, no longer restricted to the visitors' crowded room, sitting stiffly looking at each other under the hard eyes of a guard. As long as they carefully stayed within the proscribed limits of Alton, they were free to choose any secluded spot. As the early spring moved up the Mississippi River they discovered a sheltered nook above the river, where even in the shadow of iron bars, the world began to look beautiful again.

Their precious companionship tempted their hearts into happiness in tune with the coming spring, but all around them the rising tide of illness overshadowed their lives. They were both accustomed to the usual cases of diarrhea, pneumonia, typhoid, measles, and mumps that far outnumbered the injured, battle-scarred patients. But now a more deadly and fearful malady crept into the Alton fortress. Sue sensed that Eben had been shielding her from fear as long as he dared:

"Sue, there's smallpox here, and probably I shouldn't let you come any more."

"Oh, Eben, no. God has made it possible for us to be here together; we need each other. I'm not going to stay away; God will take care of us. Where is your faith now?"

It was their first stubborn Scotch argument. Tenaciously Sue held on, and Eben arguing against what he really wanted, gave in. Each week the cases increased, the death toll rose, and Eben realized that it was a doomed fight, no drugs, no sanitation, no chance to save lives. Working in the miserable, make-shift hospital Eben found a friend, a Dr. Thomas M. Hope, with whom he quickly reached sympathetic understanding. Although Thomas Hope had grown up in Alton, had been involved in

Illinois politics there, and had served in the Mexican War with the 2nd Illinois Volunteers, his strong southern beliefs had incarcerated him as a Rebel in the middle of his home town. The two doctors worked long hours together, giving each other what help and encouragement they could muster. When the deaths continued to edge higher each day, despite their most desperate efforts, it was Thomas Hope who pointed out to Eben their last resort. It would have to be that picture-island down the Mississippi in view of the fort, in happier family-picnic days named Sunshine Island. If the scourge continued to become worse, all that was left to do was to shift the dying men there and leave them. Eben looked with horror at the dim outlines in the midst of the river, at this refuge, surely a "living burial."⁷

This was Eben's distressed state of mind when Sue arrived one day with the news that she had been transferred at last from the kitchen duties to the hospital wards.⁸ Immediately he was apprehensive: had smallpox moved down the river to the Jefferson Barracks? But Sue insisted that she had always wanted this assignment and that she had applied for hospital duty when she volunteered for the Christian Commission. Here she felt she belonged; here she could give succor and aid to the suffering, discouraged, and the dying. In her first few days of hospital work a young doctor drew her aside to warn her that the scenes she would be called upon to witness and the services she was expected to give were not proper for the delicacies of such a young lady, that "he feared she would subject herself to remarks." He concluded his remarks with the challenge: "And where is your badge?"

Sue produced her Bible and indignantly retorted: "This is my badge!"⁹

The next day visiting Eben, when she repeated this encounter to him, her indignation boiled over in tears. She stopped, choking up. Eben taking both her hands in his big ones, forced her to look at him and said calmly, seriously:

"Now look here, Sue, you are perfectly right, and yet that young doctor meant well; he meant no harm. I could agree with him thoroughly except I know you too well by now. You are my Scots kin, and I know you can face whatever you have to. Don't ever forget that. Life is hard and sometimes vicious, but you have

to go on doing the best you can, even in the face of severe criticism. Don't ever give up doing what you believe is right. If there wasn't this senseless war — maybe, someday I might say to you, 'Now do give up and let me take care of you' and yet no one can ever shield anyone else, no matter how much he may want to. Promise me, you won't ever give up, no matter what happens." Sue promised and never forgot; in fact, she never forgot any of those precious hours when she and Eben shared their troubles, their family concerns, their thoughts about God, their joy being together. Those three months were to mould the rest of her life, to affect the very roots of her being.

The men delegates acted as chaplains, conducting religious services, daily prayer meetings, and preaching in the barracks, hospitals, the chapel, and occasionally in rented near-by rooms. Sue cooperated whole-heartedly in all these efforts and held earnest discussions with many soldiers on all phases of their doubts and religious beliefs. Whenever an opportunity presented itself, Sue exercised informally her "preaching privileges," which in her heart she had never relinquished since the Sigourney experience. Second-hand she took across the river to Eben the soldiers' questions and problems and from him gained new insights and help that in her woman's world had never occurred to her. Besides seeking Eben's opinion, Sue also went for help to Dr. James H. Brookes, pastor of the Washington Avenue Presbyterian Church, which she attended:

Miss Susan McBeth . . . who was laboring among the regular army men ('my boys' she called them) at Jefferson Barracks . . . went one day to Dr. Brookes with a request.

'I came here today as an inquirer. I am constantly asked puzzling questions by the soldiers concerning the way of salvation. I am troubled, often, to know how to make my answers clear and plain enough. Now I have come to you to repeat the questions put to me, and to listen to your answers.'

Dr. Brookes willingly granted her request. When she had run the gamut of the queries, and had heard the clear, unhackneyed, unprofessional . . . answers, she begged

to be allowed to bring 'some of her boys' to hear him go over these questions and answers again.

He agreed to do as she wished; and in a few days the study was filled with young soldiers, accompanied by Miss McBeth and J.W. McIntire, a St. Louis publisher . . . The lady had brought him along with an 'ulterior motive' which did her credit.

At the close of the informal gathering Mr. McIntire said that he wished the speaker to write out what he had said, and he would make of it a book. Dr. Brookes demurred, but finally, after arguments, the publisher secured an affirmative answer.

Soon after, "How To Be Saved," by J.H.B. appeared. It was a marvelous success from every standpoint, including the publisher's . . . It was widely circulated among the soldiers of both armies during our late war.¹⁰

Having "urged Dr. Brookes into authorship," Susan herself was encouraged by him and by Eben's enthusiasm to try a similar undertaking. Her account of these war experiences was published in both the United States and in England. In St. Louis, her small book was called "Practical Talks." When it appeared in London under the title of "Seeds Scattered Broadcast," Florence Nightingale, who had aroused the conscience of the world over conditions in the Crimean War, wrote the introduction. In these "talks" Sue definitely states that her main objective was to turn men's thoughts to the acceptance of Christ.

A sample of their [a number of earnest, self-denying ladies] service and method of dealing with the men . . . from the journal of Miss Sue McBeth:

"No. 1 Schofield Barracks" is a transportation depot for going South, or returning home on furlough. One day it is crowded, the next almost empty. All classes of men are for a time brought together here.

"We have about the hardest men in our hospital that you can find anywhere," said the commanding officer, . . . when Mrs. M. and I went to see if he would not appropriate to us a room for Commission purposes,

wherein to store our library, stationery, etc.

"We've been up stairs all the afternoon, and haven't yet found any 'hard cases.'

"Of course, they wouldn't behave badly before you."

He was very kind, promised us the room, and allowed the men afterwards to go across the street to prayer meeting, and very precious hours were some of these.

"Can you raise yourself up, so as to look out?" I said to a sick boy as the wind one day bore the voice of singing from the yard below . . .

The setting sun was glancing on a hundred or more new uniforms, as their wearers sat ranged in rows on the narrow piazza, or stood facing the Delegate who spoke to them the words of life.

Yesterday . . . I noticed two strangers coming into the ward . . . [one] man, too sick to proceed, had got a comrade to stay with him.

"I've been wanting so much to see you again," he said when I spoke to him:

"Why, did you ever see me before?"

Yes, in Ward I, Benton Barracks. Don't you remember, I was the one, you said, who was taking jaundice . . . "

I could not remember him; but we went on:

I've been thinking so much of what you said then, and I wanted to see you again to tell you. You remember I said something about 'getting ready to die,' and you said you didn't believe in that, — it wasn't the right thing to do; I ought to 'get ready to live' . . . instead of turning to Him at the last moment, so as to get into heaven.

And did you do so?"

"Yes, I think I did," he said, earnestly.¹¹

Sue "preached" that creed or sect did not matter.¹² All men had the same commission and goal in life, no matter what their badge. Sue relates many instances of her convincing arguments

with doubters, skeptics, even one with an Universalist, who questioned the reality of Hell. Sue was a clever and shrewd debater, using as the final proof to clinch any argument the Holy Word. Now she was thankful that as a young woman she had read and mastered Paine's AGE OF REASON and was ready with answers for all questioners. She never shrank from attending the most miserably wounded, always seeking to give them Christian fortitude in their anguish. Frequently she thanked God in her heart that Eben had been spared the terrible suffering she saw each day, and yet in the next breath she was thanking God that Eben was as truly saved as any soul could be.

We have had a lady missionary, who has given her entire time to labouring directly with the soldiers in their wards, and tells us that not a week has passed in that time but some have been hopefully converted.¹³

As winter retreated up the Mississippi, Sue indulged herself by making a feminine, beruffled, lacy blouse to wear under her severe plain black suit. Then she just must have a really daring spring bonnet to wear with it. Her millinery days in Wellsville were a great help in creating just exactly what her heart desired: a hat covered with gay flowers. She could not help feeling guilty from habit over the extravagance in money and time, and yet the first time she wore the new finery over to Alton, the appreciative gleam in Eben's eyes swept away all her remorse.

She had reported back to Wellsville that she had dutifully called upon the captured Rebel cousin Eben, but she did not tell them of the repeated trips across the river. In these stirring times there were many other events to fill a letter home. When Kate and she had so violently disagreed over the move to Sigourney, Sue then resolved that since the two of them saw people and sometimes issues in such different perspectives, it was just as well to keep some privacy. This she intended to do. From one or two guarded innuendoes in the Ohio letters, she suspected that her mother hardly considered Rebels human beings deserving care or attention at all. But by far the worst, she just knew she could hear her mother's scandalized whispers:

"But, girls, one couldn't possibly consider marriage to an own cousin! It simply isn't done in *our* family. And besides you know

perfectly well what the Bible says about *that?*"

Sue after much prayer had convinced herself that there was nothing wrong in her love for Eben, that it was sent straight from God. With all the intensity of her determined Scotch nature coupled with her conviction that she knew God's plan, Sue believed that if Eben loved her as she thought he did, they could establish a home solidly rooted in the rock of their mutual faith.

That she had grown up in Ohio and he in Tennessee, therefore she a Unionist and he a Rebel, was not an obstacle to their love. They had most seriously discussed the shattered union, her northern and his southern convictions. It was rather a challenge of the unusual. Both of them had volunteered their services to alleviate suffering, death and misery wherever they found it, north or south. They were certain their similar viewpoints and family traditions far overbalanced their political differences. But above all other considerations from Eben's experience on the battle fields and hers in the hospital corridors, they were united in the beliefs of basic Christian principles. Their belief in God would be the most important guide-line in their future life together.

It was a comfort on bad days for Sue to think of what a Yankee church steeple had come to mean to Eben. Eben left most of the talk about saving souls to Sue; sometimes he half-jokingly said she had saved his soul, at least his hope and sanity. But she knew he cared for his "boys' " souls too for he told her that the homesick prisoners had come to regard "the steeple of the Baptist church" . . . a symbol of their home and their God . . . [which] "was visible from the prison grounds."¹⁴ Many a time leaning over the cot of a sufferer, Eben related that he tried to rally a little more strength in a man by saying, "Remember the church steeple, it points toward heaven and also toward hope."

Almost exactly three months from the day Eben Law had been admitted to the Alton Prison he was notified of his transfer to Camp Chase in Ohio. When the news reached them, both Sue and Eben were torn by conflicting emotions. Immediate gratitude to God flowed over Sue; God had answered her prayers: Eben was to be saved from this scourge of smallpox. With her quick tears of thanksgiving were mingled tears of separation. Believing that Eben was needed here so desperately,

they had never considered the possibility of his being transferred to another Union Prison. If it meant eventual exchange, that was freedom and release; but whatever happened, now they would be separated indefinitely, how long no one could hazard. Sue gathered her self control sternly together for their hurried farewell. She determined to live up to Eben's code: for his sake she would face bravely whatever she had to alone. For the first time Eben enveloped her slight frame in his arms and held her tenderly but fiercely possessive, saying nothing. It was more unbelievably wonderful than she had ever dreamed possible — and then he was gone and she had to cross the river alone for the last time with a new numbness of loss, fused with thankfulness to God for rescuing Eben from this place of death.

Now Sue threw herself into her commission duties with an intensity of lonely desperation. She must be too exhausted every night to lie awake thinking and imagining the unknown. To her regular schedule of attending the wounded and dying she added all kinds of assorted odd jobs and errands for the soldiers. There were torn uniforms to mend, lost buttons to replace, letters to be read and to write home, books and pamphlets to read and to loan. Among the items distributed in the wards were "Housewives" or "Comforts" contributed by women's and children's groups working all over the country in churches. These kits

 were little bags of various shapes and sizes . . .
 [containing] needles, pins, thread, yarn, buttons,
 frequently a pair of scissors, thimbles, steel pins, lead
 pencils, handkerchiefs and other small articles . . .
 [sometimes] a letter from the sender, Testament, or
 tract."¹⁵

To ease her conscience for the time she'd taken off for the trips to Alton, she took extra duty relieving exhausted co-workers. She worked in the commission's supply, library, and reading rooms,¹⁶ preferring duty in the reading room because here she had the opportunity to lead some wanderer from God to a religious tract or pamphlet that might save his soul. In the supply room, an embryonic PX, soldiers came to secure small necessities they missed from home. Even here Sue was quick to seize the

least opening to talk about home folks which could so naturally lead to church home and then of course, on to God. If one was always alert and on the lookout, there were countless chances to talk about God, who had so blessed her with Eben's love. To replace her free days in Alton, she tried to concentrate on polishing "Practical Talks" for eventual publication because this represented to her the essence of Eben's and her mutual thinking, the foundation for their future marriage.

She had written Wellsville immediately about Eben's transfer. She hoped if he were kept in Ohio long, her family might become well enough acquainted with him to understand her viewpoint when the time came for explanations. Kate's forthright and blunt reply left no doubt what the Ohio McBeths thought. In fact, Sue was certain that it was chiefly Kate's opinion even though the letter was carefully couched with "your mother and I," even adding once or twice "Lizzie and Robbie agree." The two accusations that Sue had dreaded were there all right: a Confederate prisoner, and so much interest in a cousin, practically a stranger too! Sue vowed she'd been circumspect and discreet in all she had written. What could have aroused their suspicions? Was her love that apparent, even in letters? Perhaps could some of their mutual acquaintances in Fairfield have heard a rumor from the near-by Jefferson Barracks and relayed it to Kate?

Kate had written at length:

You've been away from Ohio so long now that you simply can't understand how people feel here about Rebels. Your visits home when you're making speeches at churches haven't counted for much. While you've been in far away Oklahoma, running Fairfield University, and now working in St. Louis, you can't possibly know what we in the old home here right on the river bank have been going through. Even yet with the war on, I'm almost afraid still to write you about it. But you know yourself because it happened while you were still living here that we had unexpected visitors for a day or so in our cellar. Can't you realize what we lone helpless women have been through, all because of those awful Rebels? Robbie is still very young, even though he

tries to act so grown. Of course we have always had trust in our Heavenly Father, who has so far saved us. But to have strangers come desperate for our help about whom no one must know has just about unnerved me. Besides that I've been almost ill from worry over threatened raids from across the river by the Rebels and tried to protect Mother from anxiety. I don't think you have any heart at all to ask us to try to visit a Rebel prisoner, even our own relative, which makes it even worse. You couldn't have been so terrified by the Texans in Oklahoma as we have been right here in our own little white cottage. There were good Christian strong men always near you for protection, and all we had was Our God. Mother agrees with me that most certainly our father would not have given his support to any Rebel, even their nephew, nor would he have approved at all of your attitude about Eben.

With the ability all sisters have to hurt each other in the most sensitive spot, Kate closed with words that made Sue wince with the final barb:

After all, Sue, it does seem to us that at your age (Kate wasn't that much younger!) acting this way about a Rebel cousin is really silly.

Then in a postscript written upside down across the top of the page as though it were of minor significance, Kate had added:

Our Robbie, who after all is now of age, is determined to enlist. Practically all his friends have already left, some of them even running away to lie about their ages. At least we can be thankful Robbie hasn't done that yet, but Mother and I don't think we can persuade him much longer to stay out. I'm not sure we ought to when you read all the terrible things those Rebs do.

As she hurried through the crowded day's activities, Sue resolved not to write home for "a good long time." Her heart ached to hear from Eben, to know how and where he was, what the future held for him — and now for her. Finally a letter did arrive from Eben; he was home once more, exchanged, back home in Jackson, Tennessee. What joy! what vast relief! In gratitude Sue's bitterness over the Ohio reaction melted away in

profound thankfulness of God's deliverance of Eben. So now she could reply to Kate, completely ignoring the Eben issue.

She answered with a blast of her own the suggestion of Robbie's enlistment. This was the last straw. No sacrifice was too much to protect their young brother; there was the investment in Signourney Square.¹⁷

The money for the lot will buy a substitute for Robbie if he is drafted . . . it *must be taken* and every penny we can raise or borrow before he be permitted to go . . .

Substitutes can and must be found, even if Sue has to find them herself or go herself . . .

Sue had gone herself and now she knew even more at first hand: the untold suffering, the lost souls gone to everlasting punishment. She reminded the home folks of "the drunken orgie and blasphemy" in the barracks she had overheard when she last visited in Fairfield. Such experiences could wreck Robbie's whole spiritual growth — a young boy like him — deprived as a child of a father's guiding faith which had meant so much to both Kate and Sue, as well as the other girls growing up. Robbie had not even yet been saved:

if he was a Christian, I would rather hear that he had died than that **he had gone where** such influences and such companions would be around him.

What was Kate thinking of? She couldn't begin to know what Sue saw week in and week out in these evil army surroundings.

He cannot go that is decided.¹⁸

This worry about Robbie recalled to Sue his babyhood at home when she'd tried to replace his father. What would it be like having children of her own, of Eben's and hers? Surely Eben would want a family too; he'd be such a fine Christian father. During that summer Sue found herself as she'd never done before watching young mothers with their laughing children playing in parks. Walking back to her quarters after a hard evening in the barracks, she caught herself hungrily peeking into brightly lighted parlors where happy families were together. And she felt her cheeks flame from her secret exciting hopes.

These were the days that the youngest sufferers in the hospitals tugged at Sue's raw emotions. She recorded in SEEDS SCATTERED BROADCAST that "I loved to go into the wards in

the . . . twilight. It was the pleasantest hour of the day."¹⁹ "A little fourteen-year-old drummer-boy in Ward P."²⁰ made her throat tighten with memories of Robbie as she'd last seen him. And then there was "Our Baby":

Why, so is this? How did you get here, little brother?"

I had slipped into the wards after the lamps were lighted, to see some of the new patients who had reached us from the South that day, and just as I opened the door my eye fell on the strangest sight. The bed nearest me had been newly filled with straw, and upon the top of it, his little limbs scarcely reaching more than half its length, lay the oddest, oldest-looking boy, with a pair of bright, black eyes, looking at me out of a little, thin, wrinkled face:

I came up on the boat. I belong to the Regiment'
— I have forgotten the number; would the face were as
easily forgotten!

'A drummer-boy?'

'No; a soldier!' and what pride there was in that shrill, childish voice, as he called over the names of the battles he had fought.

He was a waif from one of our great cities, such as only cities nourish. He had never known either parents or home, but . . . struggled up and out into the world the best way he could, until a recruiting officer, seeking one more name to complete his number, added this, and the boy was a soldier.

'Have you seen our baby yet?' asked a nurse, as I came out . . . that night — so all had christened him from the first. I never knew another name for him. They moved him to a cot near the stove; attendants and convalescents petted and nursed him, and for a time he grew better under their care. Our hospitals were very full at that time, and death was busy in every ward. I spent my strength with those I knew must soon die, and gave "our baby" only a few passing words, waiting until I

could have more time with him. He was getting much better, I thought, and needed careful instruction. He could neither read nor write; knew little more of God than a heathen child; had scarceley heard Christ's name, save as an oath. I must begin with the very rudiments of the Gospel. And so I waited for a more convenient season, giving him my brightest-covered little tracts, for his comrades to read to him, and resting myself when I came home at night by putting all the old engravings I could find into picture-books for his amusement. At last a day came when I thought I could give him an hour; but when I stood beside his cot he had gone beyond my reach! I thought at first he was asleep — but no, he was dying! I bent close to his ear and tried to make him hear me, but not a muscle of that still face moved. Light, or sound, or earth could reach no more for ever. ²¹

Sue longed to hold the few children she knew; she loved to cuddle them in her arms. Years later in the far-away hills of Idaho, her sister Kate would read with puzzled enlightenment a letter from a Reverend F.F. Byington in which he said he was in the U.S. Christian Commission with her sister Sue and

Mrs. B. loves to talk about how Sue used to run into our house in St. Louis and love our first baby and kiss it and stay for tea without taking off her bonnet.²²

Thus Sue now always in her plain, unattractive, grim black garb of the commission continued her devoted service in the Jefferson Barracks through another difficult war year. To her fellow workers Sue's unflagging energy and zeal seemed inexhaustible, but to Sue there was no mystery: she was in God's hands and through His Grace and Eben's love, she had an unfailing source of endurance. Besides enlarging PRACTICAL TALKS, the only relaxation Sue now allowed herself was answering Eben's letters.

In September, 1864, one of the worst possible months of the war, the blow from home fell. Another brief and non-committal letter from Ohio announced that Robbie, her beloved baby brother, had run away to Alliance to enlist in Company D. of the 176th Ohio Volunteer Infantry. Sue was crushed. Never before had any member of her family so brazenly flaunted her

authority. Despite Sue's "deciding" and insistence that she could not "bear to think of his being with such as these," she knew now that Robbie at twenty-two ("still so young to go!" Kate had written) was no longer her little brother. Like his firm-minded Scotch ancestors, Robbie now had determined to live his own life. Sue prayed that she'd get over the bitterness of Robert's defiance, even knowing in her heart for a certainty how wrong he was to put himself into such spiritual jeopardy.

CHAPTER 7

ALL MY FREIGHTED SHIPS

After the war was over, the St. Louis Branch of the U.S. Christian Commission continued its services almost a year longer than any other in the country. Its central location with multitudes of soldiers coming and going, filtering back to their home towns, south and north, kept the St. Louis Branch busy months after others had closed. In addition to the sheer drudgery of the work she had accomplished, Sue had demonstrated outstanding executive ability in organization and was retained until all the activities at Jefferson Barracks were disbanded, August 1, 1866, more than a year after hostilities had ceased.

Sue had never been without a position, never once since that panic-filled week she'd found herself at seventeen responsible for the support of a family. She'd vowed then that she would always have some means of support; after all she was Scotch, thrifty, canny, and foresighted. At the beginning of the summer anticipating the closing of the Commission office, she went again to talk with Dr. James Brookes. As he crossed his office to greet her, Sue was conscious that he was just about the same six-foot height as Eben. From the pulpit his black beard and dignified clerical bearing made him appear older than he did face to face. They had become good, trusting friends through their association in the Commission; she knew the reverend minister respected her ability. On her part Sue admired his forceful, dynamic personality; Sue admired any one who was so sure of himself, so certain that he knew the one correct path to follow throughout life. To Sue God spoke through Dr. Brookes, who was "very scriptural in his sermons."¹ Even today he would be able to infuse her with new confidence.

Before she knew it, Dr. Brookes had ferreted out her emotional turmoil, and she was telling him of the mixed-up

conflicts in her mind and heart over Eben and her family. He listened compassionately, for he in this border-city had been in a similar quandary during the early months of the war. Although a conservative in theology, he too had been deeply troubled by war; in fact, for a time he and his congregation had separated themselves from the northern branch of the Presbyterian Church.² But again, like Sue, in the face of evil he could not remain complacent. As workers together in the Christian Commission they had come mutually to recognize in each other fellow crusaders against sin in the large, fast-growing city of St. Louis. Dr. Brookes' impassioned preaching on the second coming of Christ convinced Sue of the doctrine, which she believed and taught throughout the rest of her life.³

Born in Tennessee himself, Dr. Brookes fully understood Sue's difficulties as members of her family could not, and sympathized with her determination to remain in St. Louis, nearer to Eben and safely distant from the disapproval in Ohio. During their interview he told Sue that she was just the person to carry out one of his projects. For some time he and his session had been considering establishing a new charitable venture sponsored by the Washington Avenue Church. The city already had numerous such institutions and yet the need grew even greater each month. The St. Louis Provident Association was founded for the purpose of caring for

temperate, industrious men out of work, indigent widows or deserted wives with young children, whom they are struggling to support and educate and mothers who by the needle are striving to earn a scanty subsistence."⁴

Thus far in the exploration for this project, the church had two main stumbling blocks: no financial backing and no competent person to direct the undertaking. From his knowledge of her work, Dr. Brookes told Sue she was exactly the woman the project needed, and he assured her that by the time the commission was concluded, he would have the financial difficulty solved. She must come to see him again.

On a sweltering, humid August day Sue kept her appointment with Dr. Brookes in his spacious office. He was about ready to leave on his vacation north and almost immediately after their

exchange of greetings, he opened their conference with:

"Miss McBeth, you really do look all fagged out. This city in August, I need not tell you, is just about unbearable. If you'll take my advice, you need a rest; you look as if you needed one badly after these last strenuous years. Why not go home for a few weeks?" and then as a better after thought —

"Why not to Tennessee to visit your young man? It will be much better if you return in September refreshed and rested, as I hope to, and we can tackle this new job together when the fall activities come to life again."

Sue felt almost faint — Dr. Brookes had put into words just what in her heart she so much wanted to do — and he had suggested it first. Practically an order from God himself, given by His respected spokesman in Dr. Brookes' usual commanding and self-assured manner. At least it really did come from the future director of her new work. It was more than three years since she and Eben had been together; this surely again was an answer to prayer! They had speculated in their letters again and again about possibilities of visiting, but Sue had been tied to her commission work and Eben just as surely tied by the financial debacle of the South. Sue's economy had enabled her to save a little sum from her last year's salary of \$900.00. She would go on that.

Having once decided the course to take, spurred on by Dr. Brookes' encouragement, Sue lost no time. Eben was delighted with the suggestion. Mrs. William Alexander, in whose house he lived, wrote cordially inviting Sue. It was a busy week of preparations before Sue left. Because her living arrangements were to be entirely different when she returned, she gave up the dingy room, storing her few belongings with a friend to save the rent. From her hoarded funds she eeked out enough to engage a dressmaker to fashion a light gray silk dress with soft ruchings of white lace at the wrists and neck. Sue thought it by far the loveliest dress she'd ever owned, and she hoped that Eben would notice that it seemed to add lustre to her smiling eyes. When she tried it on just before packing, she fluffed up her hair a bit more loosely about her face and for the only time in her life she indulged in feeling clingingly feminine. Writing that she was going to Tennessee for a much needed rest with no further

explanations, Sue mailed a restrained and matter-of-fact letter to Ohio the morning she boarded THE SILVER HEELS, going down the Mississippi.

The happiest, most carefree time in all Sue's life were those too-short weeks between the moment she first glimpsed Eben's slightly stooped six-foot-two figure waiting for her on the wharf at Memphis until she watched it fade into the distance as she returned to St. Louis. Mrs. Alexander was the gracious southern hostess, friendly and motherly. Immediately Sue sensed that both she and the "Captain" considered Eben as their own beloved son, replacing the boy whom "the Doctor" had faithfully nursed but lost in the early months of hostilities. Sue was thrilled to be introduced to Eben's Jackson friends as his cousin, knowing that the community understood that she was a cousin and something more.

Although traveling south in August was hardly the accepted mode of escaping the St. Louis heat, Sue was certain that Jackson was much cooler and surely more pleasant. The leisurely pace of the sleepy small town was a great relief after the flurry of the city. Sue slept late and spent long hours swaying in the hammock under an old elm. Mrs. Alexander bustled about insisting that she must eat prodigious amounts of her special dishes to get over her peaked look. Whenever Eben had calls to make in the surrounding country side, Sue accompanied him, jolting together over the dusty roads behind a livery rig. During the long summer evenings the veranda was theirs, where they sat screened from the street by the luxuriant "matrimonial vine," so Mrs. Alexander called it. The crickets' chorus nightly serenaded their happiness; down the long years ahead Sue could never hear their song without a sharp pang. As the evenings lengthened and a slight breeze ruffled the tinkling Aolian harp hanging before the screen door, from Happy Hollow across the creek drifted the singing of "darkies." There was time again for long talks and the half-dreaming planning of lovers, "Now, some day we'll . . ."

In their clear practical moments both Sue and Eben realistically weighed their future. Actually seeing Jackson and living there those weeks gave Sue an understanding of the devastation and the plight of the South that she never could have

gained in the North. This poverty of a defeated country was a different brand from that of the spreading slums in St. Louis; a gripping, hopeless poverty. Eben especially mourned the wasted years of their separation, and yet it was he who most rigorously argued the impossibility of their immediate marriage. It was about all he could do to make ends meet alone; he was busy enough, but there was no money for doctor bills. Those of his patients who could pay him at all did so with hominy grits, sometimes a slaughtered hog, hay for his horse, eggs, a home made quilt. He couldn't let his people suffer or die for lack of care; frequently he had to supply medicines from his scanty income. It never occurred to either of them that Sue might continue teaching or working after marriage; it simply wasn't done. There were no positions for married "ladies" with husbands to support them. And then there was the Ohio opposition. Family loyalty was too strong in both of them to flaunt this disapproval. When Sue said, "In a year or two," Eben more bluntly modified it by adding, "Maybe two or three."

Long engagements were the rule rather than the exception. Alfred, Lord Tennyson, that most romantic and popular idol, had been engaged seventeen years before marriage and happiness "ever afterwards." A few more years weren't that crucial and during that time surely Sue's family could be won over. Upon a few occasions Sue worried out loud about Eben's health, he seemed so thin. He didn't look quite well to her, but of those around them many were much worse off than he. He did seem to tire easily but his life was very full and busy, and neither were he nor Sue in their twenties any longer. When she tried to ask Eben how he felt, he only laughed and shrugged his broad shoulders saying that always with her he felt wonderful. If she persisted, he then began teasing about her slight frailty in contrast to his rugged bony frame.

In September when Sue returned to St. Louis, she was surprised and delighted to discover how wise Dr. Brookes' advice had been. She felt actually young again, full of zest to plunge into the new adventure. She had the sweet reassurance of Eben's devotion and was reenforced in her own tenacious purpose to marry him the very first opportunity that God presented. The obstacles to their marriage were not

insurmountable; on the contrary they were a stimulus to Sue's determination; she loved the spectacular and the impossible. Nothing was impossible with God, and she could now return to this undertaking in the certainty that in His good time God would work out their lives in His great plan.

THE MISSOURI PRESBYTERIAN in 1866 was running articles pointing out that St. Louis with a population of now over 200,000 was facing an acute housing shortage caused by the great influx of people after the war. Many bright-eyed young persons, discouraged by the heavy drudgery and low subsistence of farming were drifting to the gay city. In the nearby South as Sue had seen with her own eyes there was no hope in the foreseeable future. Always sympathetic with the lot of women and conscientiously against their exploitation, Sue noted that the stronger and more robust girls obtained jobs as family servants. There were too many that the city could not assimilate; among them were those not so strong physically who planned to support themselves as milliners and seamstresses, even as she and Kate had done as young women in Wellsville. But there the McBeth girls had a sheltering home; here the wages were so low that no woman could wholly support herself. Too proud to admit defeat and return home, many were constantly drifting into vice, the pitiful victims of unscrupulous carpet-baggers.

The winter of 1868 was especially severe. The river was blocked with ice; ferries ceased, and there was no mail for days. Sue fretted over not hearing from either Ohio or Tennessee and then felt guilty over her own loneliness as she faced the suffering and death all about her in the St. Louis slums.⁵

It was to help these stranded women that the Washington Avenue Presbyterian Church under the driving leadership of Dr. Brookes established a home. Backed by the finances of the church, Sue marshalled untiring energies to evolve a place for young women, where for a nominal sum they could have room and board with Christian, home-like surroundings. Additionally she attempted to provide some forms of wholesome entertainment. At this early date Sue and Dr. Brookes were developing a combination Y.W.C.A. and a settlement house far in advance of Jane Addams' Hull House in Chicago. Sue recognized that much help and thought was given to rescuing

"fallen young women," but no efforts were undertaken to aid them before they were driven to calamity. In an article entitled "What is to be done With My Girls?" she summarized her thinking:

Common servant girls can find employment, churches will take care of poor widows, the asylum opens its doors to repentant Magdalenes. No provision is made for homeless and friendless seamstresses, shop girls, who cannot do heavy housework and flock here from all parts of the country thinking that in such a large city they can find employment. If they do work they get such low wages that they can live very meanly. Their savings don't last, they may become ill, if they are Christian they may resist temptation otherwise not. It is a wicked city beset with poor homeless girls on every hand. It is much better to save girls from falling than to wait to help them after they fall.⁶

Gradually during the next year or so the Home for Young Women took form under Sue's guidance:

It is not a place for paupers, not a reformatory, not a place for the fallen, only repenting magdalenes. It is no place for the lazy, it is not a place for the infirm of our own sex, it is not a hospital, it is not a nursery. Women with husbands are not admitted, none can come in who have six or eight dollars a week except when others are dependent upon them. None are received who only seek cheap board so that they can spend on gay clothing.

Even more regulations were found necessary; a couple of unfortunate incidents added the requirements of "good references." The highest board charged was \$3 a week, and when the residents' income fell, they took over the housekeeping chores of the home. During one very low season there were 26 women with 23 young children, none of whom had any outside support. Those children of school age attended the public schools. The church women were a great aid in furnishing clothing for both women and children. On Saturday mornings, Sue established a regular sewing society to teach the older girls as well as their mothers dressmaking and millinery,

"useful and fancy articles . . . [to] sell."

There was a distinct department for transients who were given separate rooms and ate at separate tables only meeting "the family in the dining room during . . . worship." As transients the home sheltered all ages from an infant only a month old to an old lady of sixty; these people came from all classes of society although Sue admitted that the majority were servants. The very first inmate of the home had been a Methodist "young girl educated in a refined home of affluence" who arrived seeking shelter with only 25¢ to her name. Ultimately she was helped to secure a job as a clerk for \$16 a month, paying \$10 a month for board at the home.

Although it was called a Presbyterian Home for Young Women, there were more Methodists than Presbyterians, more Catholics than either one, but the vast majority of the residents belonged to no church whatsoever. And there is where Sue's ardor really took over. In her mind

the chief aim of the home . . . was a place in which work may be done for the Master . . . the soul is cared for as well as the body.

All the inmates were required to attend church, all the children Sabbath School. There was a Saturday evening Bible class; every day opened and closed with family worship. Sue sought to throw around each one . . . direct religious influence . . . [to sow] good seed . . . and fruit already reaped . . . more than enough to repay all the toil and money expended."⁷

It was after this particularly trying severe winter that in the spring Sue had the alarming news from Eben that his devoted Mrs. Alexander was dangerously ill, that he was gravely concerned. Only a few days later came a second letter:

My Dear Sue

Jackson 15th, '68

I will keep my promise and write you a line or two. When I wrote to you last I told you Mrs. Alexander was very ill. She gradually got worse and died on the evening of the 11th Inst. Oh, Sue, I thought I had lost my best friend on earth but I will not say that as long as you are living. I certainly have lost the best friend I had in Jackson. Bitterly I feel the loss. I am still improving and

will write to you in the beginning of next week. Write to me as usual on Monday. I hope you are well. May God bless you.

Truly yours,
E.B. Law

Knowing how close the Alexanders were to Eben, his second family, Sue longed to be in Jackson with him, but finally decided that it would be wiser for Eben to come to St. Louis. At first he demurred about leaving the Captain even for a week in the empty lonesome house.

As their letters crossed each other with counter suggestions, Sue had word from A.J. Ralston, her Wellsville girlhood friend, that he was returning north in June from Panama because of another seizure of malaria. If she were still in St. Louis, he wished to stop for a visit. Here was another answer to prayer! Sue recalled how congenial the Ralstons had found Eben years ago in Wellsville; this was the perfect opportunity to change her family's opinion. Since she was more than ever convinced that Kate was the chief objector, Sue would urge Kate to come for a visit at the same time. Really it would do Kate good to get away for a change from Wellsville. The four of them could have a splendid visit, and just perhaps, when A.J. saw how it was with her and Eben, he might even see Kate in a different light, who could tell? Were Kate in love herself maybe she'd be more tolerant and amenable toward Sue and Eben's plans. With carefully chosen words Sue wrote suggesting that Kate come, telling of their friend's visit, omitting any mention of Eben's coming. She soothed her conscience that "after all Eben hadn't promised yet" — in fact, he didn't have the faintest notion of Sue's scheme.

It couldn't have worked better Sue thought as she prepared for her three visitors. Even the weather was cooperative, for early in June St. Louis was still only pleasantly warm, a truly beautiful city. Sue took a week of her vacation, and when she made the arrangements with Dr. Brookes, he suggested housing for the two men.

But after she had said good-bye to Eben, the last one to leave, Sue ruefully repeated to herself her countryman's line, "the best laid schemes o' mice an' men gang aft a-gley." Just as everything

had seemed to be working so perfectly before the three arrived, now that they had departed, everything had gone just as badly. Even the weather that had appeared so promising the first day, turned into drizzly rain that necessitated a change in all Sue's carefully laid plans. The steaming dampness had brought shaking chills on A.J., who left St. Louis precipitantly. He had hardly been gracious to Eben after he learned that he and Sue were engaged. He made no secret that the main reason for his coming was to ask Sue to marry him, and that he thought she should have told him the situation before he came. Then there was her worry over Eben. With the wet weather, his hacking cough had tormented him all the time he was there. To Sue he seemed thinner than a year ago, and his color was bad. Despite his insistence that the last sorrowful months had dragged him down and that the coming summer would find him better, Sue was now genuinely worried over the state of his health and frustrated that there was nothing she could do about it. And as for Kate! Throughout her visit she had been frigidly polite to them all, sometimes in Sue's opinion hardly civil to Eben. A.J.'s obvious devotion and disappointment over Sue made Kate look and feel like an unwanted extra wheel. Kate was hurt that Sue had lured her into coming under these circumstances and never forgetting, thirteen years later she echoed her experience by writing:

Reading the history of Jacob . . . I have been comparing a planner I know hoping that she will see Jacob like that . . . it is all fruitless. I have no ability to manage.⁸

As 1868 became 1869, Sue found that the continual rounds of mothers' meetings and the exacting supervision of the Home for Young Women was becoming more of a burden than her strength could bear. Through her work and church associations Sue had come to know many prominent St. Louis citizens. Among them was Mrs. Mary Easton Sibley, a very wealthy older woman, the daughter of the distinguished Rufus B. Easton. With numerous financial and social resources at her command, Mary Sibley had come during the past few years to the rescue in several crises. The two women were now good enough friends so that Sue felt free to go to her again about this personal dilemma. Mary Sibley "had advanced ideas for their age . . . [and

was] one of the most avowed advocates of women's suffrage."⁹ In their conversations she bolstered Sue's innate feminism, pointing out to her that by continuing to work in the Home for Young Women she was truly not fulfilling God's purposes for her life. By now the home was well established; Sue had accomplished that objective and others should take over from here. Mary Sibley agreed that Sue's greatest effectiveness was not working with women and children. Probably because of her earliest years tutored by her father in a man's world, in many ways much like Mary's relationship with her famous father, Sue was not a "woman's woman." This also the two women shared in common: they were basically not the domestic type. Mrs. Sibley, a great believer in women's education, was insistent that each woman must develop her own capabilities whatever and wherever she might be. Would Sue be interested to return to teaching in the school for women, Lindenwood, which the Sibleys had founded and supported at nearby St. Charles?

Another attraction the women had for each other was Mrs. Sibley's experience at the Ft. Osage Indian Reservation. Before the war her husband, Major George Champlain Sibley, had been chief factor and Agent there. Mary Sibley knew at first hand the plight of the Indians as Sue did from her brief Choctaw experience. For hours they exchanged opinions on this subject, but again Mary Sibley did not think that Sue should expend her sharp and incisive mind on the "savages." In Mrs. Sibley's judgment those primitive peoples could be just as well served by a less brilliant intellect; in fact, she implied that a teacher without such high academic standards might even be more sympathetic in guiding the Indians toward civilization and Christianity.

Sue did not limit her consultations to only local persons, Mrs. Sibley, Dr. Brookes and others living in St. Louis. Knowing of Dwight L. Moody's help in organizing the U.S. Christian Commission in Chicago, she wrote to the famous clergyman seeking any ideas he might wish to offer:

Our church here is trying to start a Young Woman's Home for shop women and others with hospital accommodations, Intelligence Office, etc.¹⁰

and expressed her wish that he might advise her from his own knowledge of poverty in Chicago of any further steps she could

take in solving similar problems in St. Louis. Contrary to his reputation for helpfulness, the noted evangelist replied with a curt dismissal. This work of Sue's to ameliorate the lot of unfortunate working girls in a crowded impersonal city was much ahead of the current thinking of the late 1860s. It may be that this undertaking was one of the most constructive and forward-looking attempts Sue ever took to aid others, but circumstances all conspired to make it impossible for her to guide it to full fruition.

Facing another grim winter ahead of suffering and want in the city with no new avenues opening for more effective remedies, Sue was desperate. She confided in Mary Sibley that Eben was insisting that she had long enough given every ounce of her spiritual, intellectual, and physical reservoir to help others. Eben now had emphatically decided that they should wait no longer to be married. He realized that he would never be as strong and as hardy as he had been before the war hardships, and he feared that Sue was continuing to overtax her frail body. Sue fretted that possibly she was giving up a fight, was seeking an easy way out. Never one to "mince words," Mary Sibley was immediately adamant that Sue's future should be with Eben. She recounted to Sue the happiness and accomplishments that she and her husband had known together for almost fifty years. Feminist though she was, she argued that a husband made life complete for any woman; Eben could be a tremendous aid in forwarding many "advanced causes" which were most difficult, if not impossible, for a woman to pursue alone. Mrs. Sibley's reasoning fortified Sue's decision.

To their mutual joy, Sue and Eben set a wedding date early in the new year, February, 1870. Mrs. Sibley, delighted with their plans, insisted that the "simple, quiet wedding" be held at her fashionable estate. Sue was determined to fulfill her contract to the end of the year and hoped she'd be able to acquire some necessities for her future home. Eben wrote that he had purchased her plain, gold wedding band and had it ready waiting on the top of his bureau. For them both life took on the happy glow of anticipation. The "Captain" urged Eben to bring his bride home to the Alexander house, where they all had such happy memories, and wrote Sue that he would be only too

happy to have a woman about again who could straighten out their bachelor place.

Late in the fall, Sue was terrified by word from the "Captain" that Eben was down with typhoid which had swept through Jackson. Panic and fear seized her with urgency that she must go immediately to nurse him. But before she could make arrangement to leave, the next mail brought the blessed news that he was out of danger. As the Christmas season neared, Sue continued to be concerned over Eben's health but even that was submerged in their anticipations and in the season's preparations at the Home. Her resignation was to become effective on January 1, 1870, but she had agreed to stay the six weeks before her marriage to help get a new director started. It was an especially raw, windy, cold January, and on the tenth of the month a telegraph boy opened her office door to hand her a telegram. Eben was dead.

They picked Sue up and carried her to her room, believing she was dead too. At first she could not talk intelligibly nor move her one side, but doctor's verdict of a "slight shock" was correct, for little by little she recovered. But never was Sue quite her St. Louis self again. Her smiling gray eyes looked hurt and wounded, and when she finally began to get to her feet once more, one leg dragged and dragged the rest of her days. Now it was as she returned to the living world that she thanked God hourly for her kind and concerned friends, and there were many from her seven years in St. Louis. Some counseled that she go home to Ohio for a long recuperation, but not those closest to her, Mrs. Sibley and Dr. Brookes, who knew her heart better. These were the weeks when Mrs. Sibley became Sue's "second mother,"¹¹ sympathetically sustaining her in overwhelming grief and loss. Dr. Brookes backed up Mrs. Sibley's insistence that Sue remain in St. Louis and that the best therapy for a broken heart was to return to the home as soon as possible helping others with crushed lives. She could still be useful in this growing home, and she must not give up. Her two friends' earnest advice so echoed that of Eben's when he was in prison that Sue could still hear the echo of his voice saying: "Don't ever give up . . . you can face whatever you have to . . . promise me, you won't ever give up."

For another year and a half Sue remained in St. Louis with

lessened responsibilities but still as busy as she could keep herself. She had time to collect the shattered pieces of her life and to begin to reconstruct her thinking about a future alone, which she was sure without Eben and after the stroke would not be too long. In the summer of 1871, Kate wrote that she was considering giving up her teaching in Pennsylvania because their mother was progressively more frail. Again Sue saw God's leading; it was now her turn to care for Mary, to release Kate after ten years of responsibility in "the little white cottage." By now Sue was sure she was steady enough, had regained enough of her self control to face her family's dictum: "You see, Sue, just as we said: it wasn't good, it was never meant to be." Finally she was able to admit to God that although she couldn't understand WHY, at least she did believe all was in His Hands. Sue was herself not too strong; she did need quiet and recuperation herself. She could care for her mother, and now that PRACTICAL TALKS had been published, and plans were on foot for the English edition, she'd use her time writing the postponed history of the Choctaw Mission.

Before she left St. Louis, Sue visited Jackson once more. She and the Captain stood in prayer together over Eben's grave; she attended the Alexanders' and Eben's church and his friends, fellow Masons, church members, crowded around afterwards to say:

Eben was "respected and beloved by the entire community . . . no man had stronger claims on the hearts of the fathers and mothers of Jackson than Dr. Law . . . For more than two years he followed their brave boys in the Confederate Army . . . many a painful wound did he heal . . . many a fevered brow did he soothe . . . he was unremitting in his attentions to the sick [of] this county . . . he was a noble Scot . . . long [would his memory] live in the hearts of the citizens of Jackson."¹²

With her heart welling with comforting sorrow, Sue packed to leave St. Louis for the last time. Closing this secret chapter of her life, Sue wore on her third finger her greatest worldly treasure, the plain gold wedding ring that Eben had kept on his dresser.

Back in Wellsville Sue and Kate had the summer together to shift the routine of their mother's care to Sue's responsibility.

Mary was frail and courageous but very forgetful; in her own quiet Scotch way she was determined to be no burden but needed constant watching. In the fall when Kate left to resume her duties in North Sewickley, Sue readily established a satisfactory schedule that allowed her plenty of time and leisure to work on the history of the Choctaw Mission. Her actual household duties were slight because Lizzie, now married to Arthur Kelloway, willingly did the cooking and housework, if Sue took over completely the care of the frail old lady. The arrangement worked out nicely for Sue, because it gave her much solitude and uninterrupted time for writing and meditation. She soon was launched upon a vast correspondence with the Luther Byingtons, the Kingsburys, George Ainsley, and the American Board in Boston collecting all possible facts that could be located about the Choctaw Nation and the mission.¹³

Day after day, Sue consecrated herself to the sifting of material and to writing the account. Sue's HISTORY OF THE CHOCTAW MISSION was lost or lies buried deep in some old file. It has never been published, but in the Divine Plan that the McBeths believed ruled their lives it served one monumental purpose. Sue discovered that the Reverend Ainsley was now teaching in Lapwai, Idaho Territory. Well did he recall Sue and her able teaching in the Choctaw Mission! He urged Sue to come to Idaho to continue her work with Indians, but as long as Mary McBeth was living, Sue knew her first duty lay at home.

On April 5, 1873, Mary McBeth fell asleep for the last time. After the family had buried her beside their beloved father on the hill overlooking her home and the Ohio River, Sue knew that she could start out again. The McBeth house was noisy with the happy chatter of young Kelloway children; her mother no longer needed her care; Kate was busy and gratified with her teaching in Pennsylvania. This was the year of the Great Depression when established Female Seminaries were having difficulties keeping their present staff on salary and were taking on no more new teachers. The Presbyterian Church needed her in far away Idaho, and as Sue wrote:

He has called all my heavily freighted ships into the heavenly harbor! Now . . . I will go to the Nez Perces; with such work to do for Christ I can rise to life again.¹⁴

In the few remaining months Sue had in Ohio, she read all the possible information she could glean about the Nez Perces and prepared her clothes and the necessary supplies to be taken out to the frontier country.

The week before I started for Idaho, I finished and mailed the last pages of a history of the Choctaw Mission, and of the Missionary Fathers Kingsbury, Byington, Alfred Wright and their wives gathered from those papers. What a work those dear friends accomplished among the Choctaws.¹⁵

During those last weeks together, with hot tears welling into her eyes, Kate frequently contended with Sue's determination to go West:

"Sue, how can you leave your home in your crippled condition and go to Idaho among those pagan Indians? Lizzie and Art will always keep your room for you. Probably before long you can secure a teaching position nearby like mine." She rubbed her eyes. "Now with Mother gone and all the other girls married except you and me, how can you leave? We shall never on this earth see each other again!"

"My Master calls me to these poor children of His," Sue sharply retorted. "I have at best but a few more years to live. It is clear that my place is not in the old home any longer; no one here really needs me any more. Here I am not a part of this growing, active family. I shall go to the Nez Perces and earn my eternal reward. Besides, Kate," she ended with finality, "You do not love the Indians as I do!"

CHAPTER 8

AWAY OUT IN IDAHO

Until Sue went as a missionary to the Choctaws in 1860, the two sisters had been together practically all their lives. The anxious days at Fairfield and the rowdy pupils at Sigourney had been shared. Now when Sue was thirty and Kate twenty-seven, Sue went south to Indian Territory and Kate back to the shelter of her family and the white cottage by the river. Never venturesome like Sue, Kate had always in their earlier exploits forced herself to follow along after her older sister. A good scholar, and because of her wit, humor, and love of people, a good teacher, Kate's interests were domestic. Now that Sue had chosen to go off by herself as a missionary to Oklahoma, Kate was happy to return to her mother, who was growing old in Wellsville.

Still at home was the youngest, Robert Alexander, eighteen years old, adored and indulged by his older sisters and mother. His enlarging horizons along the water front and his associations troubled them all. Robbie was already evincing alarming independence in his attempt to grow up and away from his completely feminine childhood home. Kate was sure that from her teaching experience with boys his age she ought to be able to influence her younger brother during the next few crucial adolescent years. As a sympathetic but experienced older sister Kate would appeal to Robbie's better nature and help her mother guide him toward the McBeth ideals. Normally individuals in their family identified themselves with the church when about his age, but so far Robert had given no sign of proper conversion. He had had no sweeping experience of saving grace like Sue or others in the family. Taking into account the family background and the discussions he had heard all his life about salvation, Robert's conscience was too sincere to falsify convictions he did not have. He was waiting and searching for a "something" that had not happened.

Thus Kate regained her place in the old home that emotionally she had never left. With recommendations from the Sigourney public schools, Kate secured a position in the Wellsville public schools. The church that Alexander McBeth had helped found and build became the focus of her devotion and solicitude. The next few war years were hard and trying for Kate, but from the experience she gained a sense of the Father and Son so personal that this firm faith carried her through all life's crises.

Sue, during the fourteen months that she was far away from Ohio in Oklahoma, did not in the Choctaw experiences forget her family. She wrote them regularly and spared no details of her harrowing moments, nor of her triumphs. Kate did most of the writing from Wellsville so she pushed into the background of her consciousness their bitter disagreement over Sigourney. When finally Sue was forced to flee from the South in 1861, she had scarcely been back in Wellsville a week before the letter arrived from the Reverend George Axline in Fairfield offering her a better position than she had left the year before. This time Kate was not even tempted to return with Sue, even if Sue had suggested the possibility.

Right then Kate had several good reasons for not leaving Wellsville. Everyone agreed that it was wise to have at home a steady sensible daughter during these trouble-filled war years. Kate almost grudgingly admitted now that as usual Sue had been right in her insistence that it was prudent for the McBeths to withdraw from their underground railroad activities. As Sue had prophesied, their mother had reluctantly given up the undertaking after the girls left for Iowa five years ago. Kate did worry, however, that with her return Mary might be persuaded to allow their cellar to be used once more as a "station." It would be a struggle to restrain her mother's Scotch conscience if outsiders brought pressure on them again. But now that the War was actually upon them, the negro traffic was easing off, but other worries moved into the vacuum. There were constantly new frightening rumors: Morgan's Raiders were coming or alarming bands of lawless smugglers were about to land on the banks of the river, right in front of their little white cottage. Life in Wellsville was filled with apprehension and nervous uncertainty.

In all the turmoil of war, the greatest concern of the Ohio McBeth family, as it had been for Sue in St. Louis, was for young Robert. When he furtively slipped out of his room one night leaving behind a boyishly scribbled note, Kate and her mother consoled each other and prayed to God to protect their darling. Secretly Kate was intrigued with her young brother's open rebellion against Sue's edict and in her heart grudgingly admired the courage of his defiance. It was the first open break of independence any McBeth had dared make against the rigid discipline Sue had imposed upon the family after their father's death.

And then there was another important, her own private reason, why Kate wished to remain in Wellsville. There was a certain young widower with the most adorable little daughter; Kate thought, just maybe, he was showing her small special attentions. At least his attitude reminded her of John Anderson in Fairfield that one year. True, nothing had come of her hopes then, but one could never be sure what might have happened if she'd been allowed to remain in Fairfield. Loving children as she did, Kate had already fallen in love with the motherless child; it wouldn't be the least bit difficult to include her father in her affections. Sensitive and diffident in expressing her secret thoughts, Kate mentioned this to no one, even blushed in the dark over the temerity of her day dreams of future happiness in a home all her very own. Could it ever be, or was it only her imagination? Nearing the fatal age of thirty, Kate was well aware that she was almost an "old maid" — if not already called one behind her back. Except for those frankly school-teacher spinsters, practically all the girls with whom the McBeths had grown up were either busy housewives and mothers or waiting for their soldier boys to return. Kate knew it was now or never, and she did not intend to be torn away again from any possibility, no matter how tenuous.

But the war finally dragged itself out to its dismal end even in Wellsville, and still Kate was teaching other people's rambunctious youngsters. Weary at night, she trudged back to the little white cottage, now often overcrowded with the noisy friends of Lizzie's. There was her mother to care for, but life slipped away in deadly monotony. Kate never did quite make up

her mind about her brief day-dream. The young father one day brought back to town a flighty, young, pretty bride (so the church women reported with raised eyebrows) to take over his lonely household. Had it been all Kate's own imaginings? At least she had kept her dignity and pride; she was sure she'd never run after him publicly. But it wasn't her imagination after Kate had taught seven years in Wellsville, that she learned some of the more influential parents of her pupils were critical of her severe, plain, even dowdy clothes. Perhaps it was a front for their resentment of her practical, work-a-day, no-nonsense discipline that expected old-fashioned class room decorum and results. There was no mistaking the pointed suggestion that Kate had better look elsewhere for a more congenial position. Stung by the criticism, Kate took her trouble to her Heavenly Father, and He answered her desperate need.

The first year after her return home, the Reverend W.W. Lavery of her alma mater, had left Wellsville and gone to Beaver, Pennsylvania, to take "control of" the Female Seminary there.¹ Now he was needing another teacher in Beaver; it was not far away from home, only across the river and up a piece in Pennsylvania. Kate believed that if her friend Mr. Lavery had remained in town, there might never have been this distressing necessity to leave home. Knowing both the McBeth girls and their family from their attendance of his Wellsville Seminary, the Reverend Lavery welcomed having Kate join his staff. It was flattering to Kate's wounded pride to be leaving the small-town fault-finding. When Sue paid a brief visit home, Kate confided to her sister the unkind gossip. Sue's prompt rejoinder that God's true servants never wasted their worldly goods on unnecessary adornment bolstered Kate's innate Scotch thrift. At the same time Kate felt ruffled by Sue's implying that Kate was a weak Christian to be bothered by such remarks.

In contrast to the rawness of the frontier Iowa communities Kate had known when she first left Ohio, she found Beaver a congenial, settled town. It considered itself an established borough with both an academy for young men and the female seminary, several churches, a thriving business district with banks and hotels, all centered about an attractive square. The prominent Cunningham family had been associated with both

educational institutions for some twenty years, and it was through Kate's connection with the seminary that she came to know Mrs. D.A. Cunningham, whose husband had been recently president of the board of trustees.² Kate's move to Beaver marked her first venture into a new community without her older sister's support and counsel. Deprived of the accustomed companionship of any member of her own family and reconciled now to her unmarried status, Kate welcomed Mrs. Cunningham's friendship and cherished it throughout her life. Like the McBeths, the Cunninghams were Presbyterians, so the two women worked closely together in the women's church society, during the pastorate of the Reverend David P. Lowery.

Both women felt they were just beginning really to know each other intimately, when two years later Kate received an urgent request from the North Sewickley Academy, not far away across the Beaver River. The Reverend Henry Webber, who was "pastor of the church and principal of the school,"³ had to have a sudden replacement in his teaching staff. Would Kate come as "principal teacher" to the young ladies?⁴ It was a thriving, growing academy of both girls and boys, and the new principal had enticing plans for the future. The salary was much more than Kate had ever been offered before. With the chief financial responsibility of her mother now that Sue was working for a pittance in St. Louis, Kate did not see how she could refuse it. Brought up to believe implicitly in God's care and guidance every step of her life, Kate did not doubt long that all this was in God's plan for her. Mrs. Cunningham agreed with Kate's decision and was reassuring that they could continue their friendship and association because the distance between Beaver and North Sewickley was not at all insurmountable. If nothing else, their church associations would naturally bring them together several times each year.

Mr. Webber had ambitious plans for North Sewickley because the academy buildings were used for a time as a Soldiers' Orphan School . . . [and he] built an addition of about forty feet to his house for the accommodation of pupils, who at one time numbered about three hundred.⁵

In her teaching Kate found herself caught up in the exhilarating expansion for the future. Everything was excitingly successful, and Kate's spirits and energy rose to meet the

challenge. The pupils were enthusiastic, appreciative, and cooperative, a welcome contrast to some she had known in other schools. The women teachers lived at the Webbers with most of the girls and spent many happy hours together. Years later Kate would recall

The picture of the dining room at dear old North Sewickley with its attendant listeners . . . in contrast with this little church full.

Mrs. Lula Webber, wife of the school principal, was also teaching and worked long hours side by side with Kate when the school suffered the dreaded scourge of smallpox. Following her life time habit of church work, Kate endeared herself to both the Webbers by helping in the local church of which the Reverend Webber had been pastor. At the conclusion of her second year at North Sewickley, Kate clipped with satisfaction from the newspaper the announcement of the summer session closing services which were held in the Presbyterian Church. It concluded:

No other Academy in the State has better qualified teachers. The Misses McBeth and Dickson have no superior as teachers.⁶

It was to Kate that Lula Webber turned for help when she was left a widow by the sudden death of her husband early in 1871.⁷ Now it was Kate's turn to take responsibility for the immediate, necessary decisions, to comfort and console her bereft friend. This was the first opportunity that had ever come to Kate to take the initiative in such a crisis, and the experience knit her to Lula Webber with deep ties of affection.

Lula Webbers name is not forgotten. dear Mrs. W. how many Thanksgivings we have spent together—⁸

The year of 1871 that brought such drastic changes at the North Sewickley Academy also brought changes in Kate's home across the Ohio River in Wellsville. After the years of hard and bitter experience in St. Louis, Sue again returned to Ohio in the spring of 1871. Still convalescing from the paralytic stroke, she spent countless hours alone in her room. The McBeth family traditions relate that Sue was very aloof and difficult at this period in her life. She not only needed solitude to push through her literary efforts on the Choctaw history, but she wanted desperately to be

alone, to bear her deep reverses in stoic silence. To have privacy in the crowded little white cottage was almost an impossibility. Unlike Kate she did not now dissolve in tears and scorned to weep out her sorrow or to seek help from her loving family or from understanding friends. Twenty-four years before as a young girl of seventeen, she had stood dry-eyed by her father's open grave. Now she prided herself on complete self-control as evidence of her unquestioning acceptance of God's will. During dismal December of that first year home, Sue wrote to Iowa about the taxes on the property she and Kate jointly owned. Sue's hopes of securing some financial return for her writing were not materializing, so in her straightened financial situation and in feeble health, it was most fortunate that Kate was earning a good salary over at North Sewickley.

Sue's silent suffering and withdrawal from everyone else was hard on the family. Except for caring for her mother, Sue hardly was a member of the family. Some days she only appeared at meal times. Occasionally even her meals had to be taken to her, since she was convinced she had come home to die. During the summer of 1872, the young noisy nieces and nephews visiting the Ohio home found Aunt Sue's deep gloom most distressing. In contrast the children loved Aunt Kate's ready laughter, the warm puffy gingerbread men she let them help bake, her readiness to share their jokes and pranks and trips about the river banks, and best of all the marvelous stories she told them by the hour. They had been brought here by their mothers because it was obvious to everyone that Grandmother McBeth was failing rapidly. When Kate returned to North Sewickley for the fall term, the sisters knew that surely it was again God's Providence that had brought Sue back to Wellsville. Had she not been here, Kate could not have returned to Pennsylvania, for these days their mother needed constant watching, care, and attention.⁹

It was a deep loss to the entire McBeth family when their mother died in the spring of 1873, but Kate's life was the only one emotionally disrupted. She and her mother had always been more temperamentally congenial than any of the other girls and had lived more of their lives closer to each other.

In the years after the death of her mother and the marriage of her sisters, Lizzie and her husband, Arthur Kelloway, continued

to live in the family home. Although Lizzie reassured her sisters that it was still their home, Arthur now owned it. With a new young family busy growing up in it, there was really no place for an old maid aunt, and Kate spent less and less time in Wellsville. Outside the school room she devoted more of her leisure hours to church activities. She was not only instrumental in founding a missionary society in the home church of Wellsville but also one in the Presbyterian Church of Rochester, Pennsylvania, not far from North Sewickley. She formed many friendships among her pupils and their parents in the New Brighton and other neighboring Pennsylvania congregations. Some of Kate's pupils remained her admirers throughout their life-times; among them were two future doctors: Dr. George Boyd and Dr. Theodore Simpson. Dr. Simpson's older daughter was named Kate McBeth Simpson.¹⁰

As the years slipped by and Kate entered her forties, she felt that there was nothing new or challenging in her routine teaching. She too must make her life count for something worthwhile. In common with Wellsville she mourned in 1875 the sudden death of her girlhood friend, William Chapman Ralston, the famous banker and entrepreneur, part owner of the fabulous Comstock Lode. None of her friends was growing any younger; in fact, suddenly everyone looked older and more tired than Kate felt. It was shocking to think how life was flying by, leaving her on the side lines, while people like Sue and the Ralstons had ventured to far-away exciting places accomplishing their ideals. Some like the Ralstons had lost their lives, but their existence was not being snuffed out with mere routine.

In 1877, Kate eagerly awaited every word from Sue as the dark news of Chief Joseph came over the wires. All their friends knew of Sue's imminent danger and were constantly inquiring of Kate about her sister's safety. Kate was elated and proud of Sue to read in the Chicago ADVANCE that the famous General Howard had called Sue "the modern Priscilla" after his visit in Kamiah just before the outbreak of hostilities. Sue's isolation and dramatic escape emphasized the need for more missionaries. Indeed, the papers reported that the missionary lady was not to be allowed to return to Kamiah again to take up such responsibilities alone.

During the school year of 1878-79, there were unsettling new

arrangements being discussed in North Sewickley. After Mr. Webber's death now nearly eight years ago, the Reverend John Aughey "took charge of the school," retaining both Kate and Lula Webber as teachers. But he remained only two years, to be followed by a rapid succession of new changing directors and teachers: Professor Chreswell and then Mitchell.¹¹ Later came the Reverend Elias Alexander, who brought with him another minister, the Reverend James Mann and a young woman, Miss Smith, to replace Mrs. Webber. The local enrollment had noticeably fallen off, and Kate realized the status quo could not continue indefinitely. Kate still lived with Mrs. Webber, who maintained the boarding school for the few remaining war orphans. The big house now was a very different place, half empty, only a lonesome echo of those busy crowded days immediately following the war.

Among the teachers, the talk was that the few remaining orphan children were to be transferred to the new Soldiers' Orphan School at Phillipsburg [Monaca] nearer Pittsburgh,¹² under the directorship of the Reverend W.G. Taylor. This surely would be the knell of the old North Sewickley Academy to which Kate had come ten years ago.¹³

Each new change was becoming a more and more difficult adjustment for a teacher of Kate's age and temperament. Every director had his own pet theories of running a school. Frequently the ideas he put forth as revolutionary and startling were merely a rehash of old ideas under new wrappings, ideas that had been tried out long ago and found wanting. A mere teacher could only sit silently seething under the mandates of a zealous principal determined to push through his own important innovations at any cost. Kate was genuinely weary of this kaleidoscopic teacher's world and longed to be independent, to be on her own.

Slowly the idea dawned on Kate. Was God not pointing out her duty to Him and to her sister as one and the same? Robbie, too, was married; no one was left of the McBeth family who really needed her. Kate, therefore, chose like Sue to be about her Father's business, and the way plainly pointed toward the Nez Perce land to aid Sue in her school and evangelistic work there. Idaho even sounded romantically far away. There she

could not only fulfill her Christian duty as a missionary, but incidentally she and Sue could recapture those old days when they had started out together as young women to teach together in Iowa.

Kate's preparations to leave Wellsville were long and tearful. Once she was committed there were times that she wished with all her heart that she was not going so far away to Idaho. A special farewell meeting was held by the Women's Missionary Society of Wellsville, which Kate had helped establish six years before when Sue went to the far West. Meeting

at the parsonage in honor of Miss Kate McBeth who . . . will leave for Idaho to engage in mission work among the Nez Perce Indians,¹⁴

Kate found herself extolled in speeches and prayers and flushed with pleasure as she accepted their gifts and God-speeds.

It is well in one way that there is so much hurry and coming of friends at the last, & so many tokens of love from dear ones.

In the middle of Kate's last week at home, prayer meeting night, the official farewell of the church was given Kate:

The farewell services Wednesday night were to me inspiring nothing of the pathetic. With what fire Dr. Grimes, Christians talk of Sacrifice. sacrifice why are you not ashamed of yourselves all these addresses were appropriate & done me good although trying to step forward & be introduced to Presbytery. Sorry that dear Mr. Hargest had so small a part in it.

The last sermon in the home church caused Kate to write in her JOURNAL:

My last Sab at least for years in the little cottage home James Snowden preached from the text Ye shall see the King in his beauty. how hard to think of parting with loved sister & her two darling children. Artie will remember all about his Aunt Kate but not Mary. My boy is already so intelligent in bible . . . how hollowed & sacreid the memories around & in the dear cottage home with its sweet rims & grand old trees, but I must not give way to all this sentiment, if God will only answer my sainted father's prayer & gather his whole family in

heaven.¹⁵

By the next Sabbath, September 22, Kate was in Chicago, where she reflected upon her departure from Wellsville and met her brother Robert, which did not improve her spirits in the least.

The parting is over but this poor weak heart has such an ache & still dear Lord I would not turn back even if I might. I can only glance at the picture of that dear Sister & darling children more would unnerve me . . . My dear only brother met me here poor fellow how easily his tears come. Oh Jesus Master why so long in answering prayer for him." [Kate's "Robbie" had still not joined the church.]¹⁶

From now on Kate had little time for nostalgia once she was really on her way to the Nez Percés. The trip west in 1879 was uncomfortably long, but certainly interesting and Kate determined to make the most of every minute for it was still a great novelty to make this transcontinental trip on the rails. Finished since her Iowa days, there was the new iron bridge crossing the Mississippi at Burlington. As the train approached Fairfield, Kate was amazed to see how Iowa had filled with settlements since first she had come more than twenty years ago. Because she was to travel with other missionaries to the Pacific coast, she had started a few days ahead of them in order to stop in Fairfield, where she had not visited for years. The old friends from Wellsville, the McQueens, who had first welcomed the sisters to Iowa, were waiting at the station for her. Kate's moist eyes and choked throat from the joy of seeing familiar faces were ignored by the McQueens as they eagerly outlined the plans they had made for Kate's brief stop-over. They had asked friends and her former pupils to call that evening, which was a happy occasion for Kate. Some of her most troublesome boys from Sigourney, now grown men with wives and husky youngsters, delighted her by making the special trip just for this occasion. Kate laughed like the girl she had been twenty years ago, when she had been too frightened with her assumed dignity to express her pleasure. The weeping solemnity of her recent Ohio leavetaking was all forgotten in the gaiety of the revived memories of her Iowa past.

But levity was all gone again when Kate boarded the train to

join the other missionaries going west. Although Kate had always fancied herself quite an experienced expert in handling children, the two puny, sticky-fingered, complaining Hunter youngsters annoyed her. Weary after the Fairfield celebrations, Kate's only desire was to be let alone, to rest, and to assimilate the tid-bits of Iowa news she wished to retell to Sue in Idaho. But having exhausted the other travelers since they left Chicago, the two children pounced on Kate as a fresh victim. When the party gathered itself up at Omaha to change trains, some fifty-three hours out of Chicago, Kate managed to shake off the whining demanding children and their ineffective mother. There was a long tedious wait in the drafty old station until their train pulled out about noon.

Ahead of them now lay hours over the flat, dry, treeless plains of Nebraska, along the valley of the Platte. The eerie, whistling winds roaring out of the south and buffeting the wobbly train seemed a disturbing omen to Kate as she now felt far from the protection of the little white cottage by the Ohio River. Having succeeded in getting some broken snatches of sleep, Kate again thought it her Christian duty to relieve the wilted mother, to give her some respite from her squirming offspring. She pointed out to the restless children the numerous prairie dogs peering from their holes as the train hustled past; once or twice on the far horizon she glimpsed an antelope silhouetted against the sky. Every hundred miles or so at a water-spot the train made a long stop but usually not long enough to get the children safely off and on again. It was obvious that the Reverend Hunter considered his chief responsibility to read his Bible ostentatiously and to display to the three other spinsters his freshly-acquired knowledge of China, the destination of the Hunter family. Kate was scornful of the man's shallow bumptiousness, but held herself in check by admitting to herself her own lack of knowledge of the Nez Perces. But, of course, she anticipated Sister Sue's help with the Nez Perces, for Sue in her turn had been guided by the Byingtons and the Ainsleys with the Choctaws.

At last came Cheyenne and the foothills of the Rockies. Filled with expectations over the "backbone" of the continent, Kate was somewhat disappointed as the train chugged and puffed

over gradual grades to the nearly eight thousand foot summit of the Sherman Pass. The dry winding canyons of Wyoming proved more like what Kate thought the West ought to be. When the group left the train at Ogden to change to the Central Pacific, Kate by design fell in with the McDonald sisters bound for Siam. Although she had always known of these women, this trip was the first opportunity the three had to take each others' measure. Kate was pleased to find them both cultivated, educated persons in vivid contrast to the weak and superficial Hunters. The Misses McDonald had for years worked and lived together in congenial Christian sisterhood and gave Kate a thrill of reassurance for her coming reunion with Sue. Remembering Sue's earlier yearnings to be sent to the glamorous Orient, Kate reflected upon God's mysterious ways. Perhaps this might foretell that the two pair of Scotch sisters in sympathetic harmony would all be following His Will half a world apart. Kate could hardly wait to tell Sue of their solemn pact to remember each others' labors every Monday morning at the Throne of Grace.

The train made a long stop at Kelton, for this was the busy transfer point to stages making the tedious overland trip to Idaho, which Kate had been warned to avoid. All the passengers got out and walked up and down the rickety platform. The engines were changed and many of the coaches were banged around and recoupled for the last leg of the journey. It wasn't long before they were passing Salt Lake City. Kate had to admit grudgingly that Brigham Young and his misguided Mormons had located a magnificent site in the immensity of these deserts. But Kate felt contaminated by the very air of Utah, where the men called "their wives 'women' and treat them as servants."¹⁷ She was fascinated by the great Salt Lake as the train rattled around its shores or over causeways spanning its shallow waters. Here she tried in vain to arouse some spark of interest in the older Hunter child, who only wailed that he wanted another story from Aunt Kate.

Kate had planned her route via San Francisco with half-a-hope that just possibly she might renew her old acquaintance with the Ralston family. Now they were seldom mentioned except in whispered awed tones because of the financial debacle following the suicide of the older Ralston brother. As the train

crawled into the imposing San Francisco station, Kate mused to herself: "Too bad when men make their own narrow plans for their lives and forget God and His Vengeance!" It was a welcome termination of the five days of soot and cinders to register at the Grand Hotel.

Because Kate and Miss Hartwell, bound for Bangkok, were the two unattached females, they shared a room. Although Kate did not feel readily drawn to the more austere Miss Hartwell, they opened their hearts to each other each day in their shared morning devotions. From her Kate pieced together enough facts to satisfy her curiosity about the others' traveling expenses. From her first brush with the missionaries, she had been amazed at their open-handed expensive luxuries such as the air pillows and gum boots in their luggage. As for her own provisions, she was traveling light, trusting that God would care for her every need through the "Ravens' Fund." Then she learned that each one had an allowance of a whole dollar a day for meals alone! No wonder the Hunters ordered an egg apiece at breakfast, even for those children who had not been taught to eat every scrap on their plates. Positively shocking to Kate's Scotch upbringing! She wondered privately if the all-wise Philadelphia Board really knew exactly what it was doing in sending such wordly people off to the most coveted mission stations.

The train-weary travelers welcomed the weekend rest in the bustling city. But Kate was

too tired after long journey to go to church. do not think from the no. of open stores & flags flying that there is Sab. here. Oh but the Lord is patient with this sinful world of ours . . . a town of men and taverns and boarding-houses and billiard-saloons.¹⁸

Much to her private chagrin, there was not a word from the Ralstons, and Kate had seen to it that they knew she was to be in the city for these days. She bade her traveling companions goodbye and God-speed Sabbath evening at the conclusion of their little private prayer meeting, for Monday morning Kate was the only one who had to arise early in order to go to the docks where the Steamship Oregon was waiting.

The next morning Kate had just deposited her satchel in the state room and was about to return to the deck to watch the last

loading of passengers and freight, when there was a knock on her door and a message that someone had come on board to speak to her. With a suppressed flutter of hope that perhaps after all A.J. had at the last moment come to see her off, she went to the deck to face a stranger.

"Miss McBeth, I'm Mr. Cox, delegated to come for Mr. Ralston, who has been so busy and out of the city recently that he could not be here himself, but he did want you to know —"

A weak unfinished pause forced Kate to finish:

"Thank you, Mr. Cox, for your trouble. And how is Mr. Ralston and his dear family?"

"Well, you know, of course, of the sore cross that has been laid on Mr. Ralston and his brother's poor widow and children. All has fallen on my friend's shoulders alone — he really isn't a strong man after all those hard years spent in the unhealthy climate of Panama. But our Lord has marvelously sustained them all, even through the added affliction that the vile Yellow Sheets have heaped upon them. I need not tell you of the scandalous tales and rumors slandering his late revered brother's reputation — really unbelievable, Miss McBeth, that our fellow men, even some professing Christians, would so vilify a dead man unable to defend his honor."

"Oh, I do know, Mr. Cox. Please tell Mr. Ralston that I understand. As I have written him, we cannot read God's plans and must only learn to accept his mysterious workings, all for ultimate good I always try to believe — no matter how hard it is. My sister Sue and I have such happy childhood memories of the Ralston brothers that —"

The boat's sudden blast cut into Kate's reply, and the apologetic Mr. Cox with relief made his excuses and hurried back across the gang plank. Kate watched his disappearing back with a pang of disappointment, he didn't even turn to salute her.

"A.J. just couldn't face me after all this family disgrace. And maybe, his wife —"

"Miss McBeth, I believe, I'm to share the stateroom with you—"

Kate turned and faced a small graying lady smiling timidly.

Always welcoming companionship, even a stranger sharing the stateroom, Kate knew that after the tedious train journey and the bothersome children, she needed some solitude. Without

offense Kate could be friendly to this traveling companion and then let her know that she had to have this last refreshing time alone. Kate had really anticipated her first sea voyage — of all oceans the romantic Pacific would be peaceful. Perhaps under a warm fall sun, out on the deck she would be able to indulge in long leisurely hours alone. She could write numerous letters back to Iowa and Ohio and bring up to date the JOURNAL of her new life. It was for this new beginning that she must gather her spiritual forces, renew with her God the sacred trust that she was about to undertake.

The trip started most auspiciously that first day just as Kate had dreamed it might. The Bay was glassy and smooth, the Golden Gate impressive, but then trouble began:

a first class stiff breeze as the steward called it met us. Up went bow & plunge down it went in sight of Cal. bleak shore. 300 passengers. I was one of 3 ladies that did not have to use the little brown box fastened to berths . . . the 2nd day we met the Oregon rains it grew so dark at times the wind had changed & the great swells came broadside heaving ship up on side it grew worse towards evening & all had been heard to say we will have a bad night of it [,] said the whales were turning back [,] I tried my berth by holding on to slits of upper berth could stay a few minutes. the ship lurched so that at midnight sailors put up all sails to help steady it. then we went at furious rate — great broadsides would come against, heave the monstrous vessel over until my window would seem a sky light. it would balance for a breathless minute then lurch back until the guards would dip water throw [? illegible] the water back over them [,] every man was at his post poor sailors holding on the sides to keep from being washed overboard [,] the card playing drinking & swearing was all stopped the old Episcopal lady in my state room did not need her prayer book that night.

So did Kate relate the events of the voyage after she reached Dr. Lindsley's home in Portland. However, sometime during the next two months in thinking over the episode, Kate tore out this first-second page of her JOURNAL, pasted it in the back of the book, and retold the events thus:

The master was in the vessel & held me so tight up to himself and said such precious, tender things that I love to think it all over. I watched the black white capped mountains as they kept flying towards us . . . I never was surer of anything than that dark ocean would be my grave. I told the Master that as he pleased but for the sake of the dear ones at home would rather another time and place. He never walked away from me more than a moment at a time only when the vessel would seem to be turning up side down. I would reach out the words Jesus Master, O where before I could finish sentence I was beside you [.] My father holdest the wind in the hollow of his hand and I am at the helm. You are only crossing the floor of another room in your father's house. The plains, mountains and now the ocean the same roof is above you. I held him tight and asked him to go with me when I step into this wild sea . . . The ends of the earth were nearer heaven to me that night than any other spot had been.¹⁹

The hospitable Lindsleys were sympathetic listeners to Kate's recent ordeal, but from their years in Oregon were accustomed now to such tales which were more common place than startling. During the days Kate spent as a guest in Portland, she regained her composure, but she realized that gone was the opportunity for quiet meditation and private devotions she had anticipated. She attempted to shake off a persistent foreboding that her harrowing experience on the Pacific had set the pattern for her new life in the Northwest. Exactly a week after she had left San Francisco, Kate was up at four o'clock to take the river boat on the last leg of her journey into the interior and up the Columbia to the Snake into Idaho.²⁰

Kate was still half asleep and groggy when the river sidewheeler pulled away from the dock at five, but she discerned light streaking the sky ahead. Through the rising mists of the river she could barely make out the outline of Mt. Hood, snow-covered from base to summit, oppressive in its majesty, beautiful in form, angelic in its whiteness.²¹ The impressive sight filled Kate's heart with hopefulness for the future. She turned to enter the cabin and there in shocking contrast sprawled several fat,

half-dressed men on the long cabin seats snoring loudly in a semi-drunken stupor. After the boat passed Fort Vancouver, there was breakfast, a second one for Kate, because Mrs. Lindsley had insisted that she eat before leaving the house. The table was laden with heavy mugs of coffee, baked salmon, fried beef steak, fried potatoes, and heaps of bread. But out the port-holes was a pleasant surprise, a welcome contrast to the recent Pacific trip:

the unsurpassed scenery; the grand woods, valleys, hills;
the mountains of two thousand feet; the wild cascades.

"The monotonous sounds" of the engine throbbing and "the dripping drive-wheel always rolling and splashing, half in and half out of water" were interrupted by a ride on "the five-mile railway" at the Cascades. Here at the Upper Cascades they were met by a "cheery, light-painted steam boat," but apprehensively Kate could not help noticing the huge rocks looming up menacingly around them. Plainly visible in the deepening Columbia, the boulders seemed in no way to daunt the captain, so Kate took her nervousness below decks. But soon she was urged to return to see Wind Mountain and to admire its striking similarity to "a wild Indian's head" in battle array. This land mark was all the more impressive in contrast to the real Indians that stood and stared from the banks of the Columbia in their filthy rags, so far removed from the story-book "Noble Red-Skins."²²

They passed the tiny Hood River settlement clinging to the foot of a mountain. Soon it was late afternoon, and they were pulling in for the night at The Dalles.²³ As they left the boat, the other passengers pointed out the highwater mark of a recent Columbia flood. There it was more than five feet above Kate's head on the front of the hotel, the Umatilla House. The next morning was another four o'clock awaking:

the dark morning of steady knocks, from door to door,
along the upper passageway . . . before break of day,
while clear sonorous tones, following each knock, were
saying, "Four o'clock! Four o'clock!" We were off at five
in the morning, among . . . [a] cheerless and silent set of
passengers . . .

For fifteen miles they traveled on a little new railway. Kate had fortunately found a seat on the south side of the coach and had a

splendid view of the wild country side in the early morning light. The day before as they drew away from Fort Vancouver, the Columbia had been more than a mile wide, but now here as they left The Dalles it was

so set up on edge that you can throw a stone across it, pressing along with the quietude and stillness of great depth; you will notice the banks of sand in the river bends, that have all the shape of drifting snow-banks . . . Graceful lines and curves are formed . . . in the restless breezes that sweep . . . over the hills . . . Then you pass under frowning precipices, so high above you that it requires a trip to the rear platform to take in their lofty heads.²⁴

Reaching Celilo, again on the river, the passengers were once more transferred to another boat, the ALMOTA, whose captain, Baughman, most of the group knew and respected. The frequent stops of the boat at sand bars reminded Kate of that first trip away from home, now it seemed so long ago, when she and Sue had traveled up the great Mississippi to Iowa. It gave her a pang of lonesomeness for Sue, to share all these new bewildering experiences and sensations with her sister as she had then. This was a long, interminable day that seemed never to end, but Kate bolstered her endurance by the comforting thought that she would be reunited with Sue before long. Then the two sisters would renew their old associations of those by-gone days, when they were so mutually dependent upon each other for companionship among strangers. What a contrast here were these wild, even if awe-inspiring, mountains to the banks of the Ohio or even the Mississippi, now not so strange.

During the second and third days on the Columbia with numerous rapids, "which demand of the pilot a quick eye and steady nerves at the wheel,"²⁵ the boat picked up a great number of chattering Orientals, Chinese going to work on the newest link of the Northern Pacific Railway. Kate studied them with interest, thinking of her late companions, the Hunters, by now crossing the Pacific, on their way to the home land of these workers. As she watched them, she wondered anew at the strange workings of God's Plans. How could those missionaries ever reach such people with the Divine Word? Perhaps, the Nez

Perces would be as difficult to convert; but no, she would have help from Sister Sue.

On the third evening after leaving Portland it was already well past dark when the boat pulled in at Wallula,

where the old fort Walla Walla [was] built by the Hudson Bay Company . . . Wallula is a sweet name . . . its sweetness, however, stops with its name. Pebbles, sand, a constant wind, and a few old buildings in one row . . . withered grass or flowers . . . forlorn indeed! Still it is an important place, being at the head of navigation.²⁶

The passengers filed off the boat and picked their way across the dock toward the Wallula House. It afforded the barest and the only accommodations for travelers going up or down the Columbia. They were greeted by "a very industrious and hospitable couple" who "replete in personal experience" were "primed with the overland stories of remarkable character . . . of danger, of exposure, of plenty, and of want." But facing another strenuous day tomorrow on the river Kate was in no mood for western story-telling.²⁷

Here at Wallula Kate realized she was at the nearest point to Waiilatpu, which she wanted to visit. She knew there wasn't much to see, just another desolate, wind-swept ruin, but Kate wished to stand where the martyred Whitmans had located the first mission in the country more than forty years ago. But numerous obstacles made it impossible: her mounting exhaustion, a side trip off the route, necessitating a delay for another boat. Surmounting all other hindrances was the word that had reached her in Portland from Sue. Here the next morning at Wallula to accompany her the rest of the way to Lapwai would be Robert Williams, "that true servant of God." Kate did so much want to start everything off just perfectly with Sue on this new venture together, and from former experiences she was well aware that Sue would not brook any deviation from her carefully laid plans. Kate reassured herself that doubtless Sue was only trying to make the remainder of the journey easier with these arrangements. Shrugging off her disappointment, Kate ate the supper provided, a plain meal, unappetizing and lukewarm; exhausted she fell into bed.

The next morning when Kate heard Robert Williams was

waiting for her, she hardly knew what to expect after her observations of the Indians on the boat and along the banks of the Columbia. Near the door of the Wallula House stood a short, stocky, serious-faced Nez Perce searching her face. Robert Williams long ago had left the Nez Perce blankets behind him, cut his hair and dressed like a white man. Immediately Kate sensed his self-respect, his consecrated air of being about His Father's Business. Robert left no doubt in any one's mind of his position, of his responsibility and importance as the first ordained Nez Perce minister. He had been attending Presbytery and Synod meetings where he was something of a personage, a Nez Perce phenomenon since his ordination a few months ago. Through Kate's consciousness there flashed, half-remembered, certain mannerisms of Sue's. Had "the little Mother's" influence been so great that during the last six years her very attitude had rubbed off on this grown man, standing in such deadly seriousness before her? At last Kate was no longer traveling alone; with this trusted Nez Perce she already felt she was under Sue's guidance.²⁸

As the group started out again from Wallula, Kate anticipated learning from Robert much more along their journey as they neared the Nez Perce country on the Snake. He politely answered her questions in a stiff and formal manner but volunteered very little beyond her queries. When she asked him of the old beliefs and legends associated with the Nez Perce surroundings, he stiffened and his face became stern and lined. In a tone of reprimanding a child, he curtly refused:

"Excuse me, Miss Kate. These things I do not remember. I do not tell to you because they are heathen. They are past and gone. These things Miss McBeth say throw away every bit when we become Christian. These are the old ways that Jesus do not want us to remember any more."

Kate asked no more. Thus chaperoned by the stern righteousness of Robert Williams Kate reached Idaho.²⁹

CHAPTER 9

THESE OMINOUS SIGNS

It was about six weeks later that Kate stretched uncomfortably, awakening on a November morning at Cold Springs Camp on the Camas Prairie. She felt totally lost and alone. The night had been an uneasy respite. Sleeping outdoors is an uncomfortable experience at best, and most miserable for a middle-aged woman unused to the rigors of camping. At odd hours during the night Kate's fitful slumber had been disturbed by the strange Indian voices calling and singsonging as they guarded the tethered ponies. Despite the sound of wood chopping and the faint fragrance of pine smoke in the frosty air, Kate's spirit did not rally. She was cramped wretchedly from the cold; after turning all night trying to get warmer and a little more comfortable, she shivered at the thought of rising to continue the journey.

Cold Springs was a proper name for such a camp. Sue's brittle know-it-all command of every decision, Agent Warner's cold indifference to the women's welfare were all alien to the air of consecration and sacrifice that had marked Kate's departure from Wellsville a short time ago. Those Wellsville and Fairfield farewells seemed ages away, back in a world gone forever. Even these brown, parched hills slashed with deep gashes of valleys, filled only with rattling dry stones, made her long for the green bluffs along the Ohio or the rolling, corn-ripe hills of Iowa. Here there was frigid chill in the raw fall night. Cold Springs was cold all right. In this strange new experience her thoughts turned to that nightmarish voyage from San Francisco and how she had been sustained then by the very arms of Jesus. One easily associated Jesus with the tempestuous sea, but could He rescue his lost servant in this gloomy cold valley on the edge of nowhere? She had expected to recapture the warm relationship she had with Sue in those long-ago crises-ridden years of

Wellsville, but Sue, like the prairie, was frosty and rigid. As she struggled into her stiff outer wraps, Kate sniffled until she could no longer disguise her red moist eyes.

The sisters joined the Nez Perces in morning prayers. Kate again wondered if she could ever become accustomed to their monotone, reedy singing of those beloved tunes. Not one word of their jargon could she understand, and Sue had made it unmistakably clear that it was entirely up to Kate to learn Nez Perce for herself. In growing disillusionment, Kate accused Sue of smugness in her command of this foreign tongue. Kate recalled Sue's direct and brutal reply to her hint for help: "I learned it all myself with no help from anyone. I did not ask you to come for I did not then and still don't think you love Indians as I do. Now it's up to you to teach yourself as I had to; I can't add a single other responsibility to my present load. You were sent here to help me, not for me to tutor you in the Nez Perce language."

After they ate a scorched and smoky breakfast, the sun edged over the prairie rim. The surrounding huge pines glistened with diamonds before they began dripping into the sodden ground. Kate felt reluctant to leave even this scanty shelter of the flat camp ground under its gray ledge wall to face the harsh prairie winds moaning through the upper pine branches. Soon the caravan began to form and crossed the brook flowing from Cold Springs. The Indian ponies picked their way carefully among the jagged rocks and turned up a rise clothed with dark green, longneedled pines. Emerging from the grove of trees, the carriage was buffeted by the vigor of the rising winds sweeping across the brown and deserted wastes. The jouncing sisters clutched with one mittened hand their wraps more tightly and with the other hand clung tenaciously to the side ribs of the hack.

The assorted and numerous dogs and puppies raised the morning cries of the trail. The old dogs from many such journeys fell sedately into the day's pattern. The younger dogs and a few vigorous puppies in their inexperience took off on side excursions yelping after countless rolling bunches of prairie grass, buffeted by the stiff wind, stopping to sniff experimentally in numerous ground squirrel holes. Always intrigued by animals

since her earliest years, Kate watched with interest their playful antics and found her spirits rising. At intervals as they wound through the rolling open expanse, grazing horses looked up and neighed an acknowledgment of their presence. Now and then solemn long-horned nondescript cattle raised their heads across the unbroken prairie as it rolled to the gray horizon as far as Kate could see.

All morning they crossed these dry undulations of withered and matted prairie grass. After a hurried cold lunch at "nooning," Kate noted that they were working into a sharply descending valley. When the trees thinned out at a look-out edge of the canyon, the group stopped and gazed down at the valley that lay far below them.

Sue exclaimed, "There is my blessed, peaceful Kamiah. At last I have come home again to stay. See the stubble fields where my people have gathered their crops. Praise be to God!"

In Sue's first enthusiastic outburst since Kate's arrival, Kate ignored the over-emphasis of "my Kamiah, my people." Hopeful that Sue's love of Kamiah had melted her former frigidity and that this sight below them made even her sophisticated sister catch her breath, Kate entered into the home-coming mood by asking:

"Show me the government buildings. Which is the house where we are to live?"

"Since you can't yet distinguish land marks, perhaps you won't be able to pick out the actual sites. But almost below us are the blacksmith shop and the government school — the largest one is the school, where the Fees lived when we all had to flee — remember I wrote you that we spent one terrible night there together? Now that new teacher, Walter Campbell, and his wife must live there. Mrs. Campbell is pretty worldly I judge, and I would advise you to be careful of any connections there."

"Well, it will be nice to have neighbors, I . . ."

"A missionary is really too busy to be neighborly, and you must never forget that we are here on God's work with his red children. Besides those government people live an entirely different life from us and are really quite a piece down the road from the cottage. Just beyond the large school almost hidden is the carpenter shop — and yes, there it is, that new lumber, that

must be for the mill they've been promised so long. Those three small little houses on this side of the school are for the government employees — quite a God-less lot!"

"But the church and our house?"

"Kate, it isn't *our* house! How often do I have to tell you that it belongs to the Spaldings, or more properly to the government, and that I alone was given permission — only permission — to occupy it temporarily. They're directly up river toward the right quite a bit, mostly hidden by those trees. But come, we've wasted too much time already. It'll be dark now before we reach the river."

As they started the sharp descent, the Kamiah Valley below was a thrilling sight. With its back drop of green and brown Bitterroot Mountains already edged with white and its river sparkling in the low afternoon sun, the valley appeared a haven of peace. Kate strained for a glimpse through the pines of the little church across the river. There it was, surrounded by a few simple, weathered Indian cabins; many picture-book tepees straggled off in all directions from the church center. The travelers followed the rough rutted road along the canyon until they reached the river. Even fording the river on horseback could not squelch Kate's innate optimism, an optimism which was soon to be shattered facing practical exigencies.

During her last two years' residence in Kamiah, Sue had been complaining that the little home of the Spaldings was too small for herself and her school. Now to have to share even that with her sister Kate was a blow indeed. She had decided to assign to Kate the smallest lean-to room — that and that alone. They must each live their separate lives to do their separate work.

Kate was not long in discovering that no provision at all had been made for her coming. Now she wished that she had consulted Mrs. Cunningham back home in more detail about living in this wilderness. In Pennsylvania, the autumn is long, damp, cool and pleasant after the blistering August heat. In the winter, there is some snow, but alternate periods of thaw keep the ground fairly clear. Low temperatures there soon give way to warmer weather. But in Idaho the nights in November are already freezing cold. No one had prepared firewood for the newcomer and no provision had been made for her food

supplies. Thus it was that Kate faced her first Idaho winter with insufficient clothing, no household necessities, and even inadequate bedding. And the source of supply was an impossible distance away in Lewiston even had she had the money for purchases.

So short was Kate of bedding that she had to borrow some from "the worldly Mrs. Campbell" and with her help made a quilt of papers sewed to some cherished old dresses of her mother's. Within the first month Kate's hands and feet developed chilblains, and she suffered for months with this common frontier misery. She was utterly wretched with the cold most of this first winter. In her JOURNAL Kate wrote as she approached her second winter, 1880:

Last winter [1879] lived on potatoes, bread and one can of syrup. Now my winter provision is all stored away. How cold in bed, but for Mrs. C. [Campbell's] bed clothes last winter. Now here stands my great box full of warm things from loving hearts. Last winter gathered wood in the snow. Now my 19 great logs lay at the mill waiting Mr. D. [Deffenbaugh's] directions about the cutting. My God is a kind loving Father as well.¹

For one accustomed to teaching for many years in boarding schools where food and lodging were automatically provided as part of her salary, such unexpected hardships were enough to dishearten the most dedicated beginning missionary. But this was not the greatest cross that Kate had to endure in her "Mizpah." Her deepest heartache was her sister Sue, the very one from whom Kate had expected the most help and comfort.

Undoubtedly, Sue was a brilliant teacher. Her ability was acknowledged by all, even in the first teaching at Fairfield. As her teaching developed and especially in the mission field, she dramatized herself, particularly after the exciting flight from Joseph's band. She cultivated the phrase that she was "the little mother" of her "Boys." Before they left on any assignment, they knelt in prayer with "the little mother." To Sue those days had really come true when she used to play-act as an Indian queen with sisters and neighborhood children. To realize this dream, Sue had built up the Kamiah church organization exactly as she desired it. Now finally she was able to whisper her ideas to

leading session members through her mouthpiece, Robert Williams, and her wishes were accomplished. In the Kamiah church there were opposing parties and active political intrigues moving in to take over the vacuum left by the elimination of the influence and power of the tribal chiefs. Over all this Sue had been able to maintain a precarious control. Understandably she feared that with her sister on the scene, this delicate balance might be upset. If this occurred, Sue feared she would lose her popularity with her students and thus her management of the Kamiah church. This was more than she could contemplate, for in her restricted life it was all that sustained her.

Sue had manoeuvred that any mission school in Kamiah was under the direct control of the session, and as long as she dominated that body, she felt she had nothing to worry about. Kate recognized this policy when she recorded in her JOURNAL New Year's Day, 1881, only a little over a year after her arrival in Idaho: "Tribe is to be governed through the Church."

For the difficulties that arose in Kamiah, the directors of the Presbyterian Board of Foreign Missions were in a measure responsible. Inasmuch as Dr. Lowrie knew that Sue had been asking help with her work, he found a salary in his budget for the younger McBeth, when Kate requested that she be sent to join her sister in Idaho. Such a request seemed perfectly natural and fitting to Dr. Lowrie for he knew the family well and their long tradition of devotion to mission work. Kate herself had been an assiduous worker in her home town of Ohio, during the years in Iowa, and recently in western Pennsylvania. In the nineteenth century it was deemed by all denominations entirely adequate to present oneself as a consecrated Christian willing to go among any heathen. No missionary expected or received any special training or preparation for his field of service. It is not surprising therefore that Kate was given no briefing about the Nez Perces nor about what work she was expected to do. Had either the board or Kate known more about the whole Idaho situation, she could have been saved untold heartache and discouragement.

Before Kate arrived on the reservation, Sue had rather grudgingly admitted to Dr. Lowrie that since she was not at all domestic herself, she was expecting Kate to teach the women the arts of civilized home making. Without any help and a

perfect stranger to the Indians and their ways, Kate, to her sister's consternation enrolled seventeen women who were eager to learn. During recent years, Sue had been struggling to justify to both the Philadelphia Board and to the Indian Bureau in D.C. the small enrollment of her class. And now here was Kate moving in to gather immediately almost three times as many students as Sue had ever had! In having to admit that her classes were small, Sue's defense, which John Monteith now officially seconded, was that she sought quality rather than quantity. Hers was an elite school, whose pupils were being trained in order to lead their own people toward civilization. Now her carefully reasoned logic came crashing down before the evident and immediate success of Kate's school for women. Upon Kate's hapless head fell Sue's indignant jealousy, for which Kate was totally unprepared. From many past girlhood experiences Kate had known of Sue's unbending determination to dominate, but she was taken unaware by Sue's active opposition. In the private JOURNAL Kate poured out her shocked reaction and grief over Sue's attitude, but years later because her conscience bothered her family loyalty, she crossed out some references, erased many completely, and eliminated others entirely. But like words spoken in heat, words written in anger could not all be deleted; Kate failed to blot or cut out many a significant passage.

After her dismay and her frustrating experiences of the first three months in Kamiah, Kate, who adored holidays, especially Christmas, was overwhelmed with loneliness that first Christmas of 1879, which she spent alone in her one rough lean-to, cold room:

I lay this cold morning under my paper comfort and Mrs. Campbell's blanket and quilt and thought all over last Christmas in the dear little cottage home. My darling sister [crossed out: Lizzie] I know is thinking of me today and my precious children [the nephew and niece] I pictured myself there and asked the question would I leave it to undergo all the trials you have known here . . . although I seem to be so perfectly caught in a net . . . I have to be thankful that I have this poor shelter over me only for His goodness I would have been a homeless wanderer among this strange people. Peter [Miller?]

sent the Chinaman over with so many good things for Christmas dinner. And dear Mrs. Campbell sent her offering. Was at the little church today. It was packed to the utmost. Archie [Lawyer] with all his grand manner preached. Robert Williams sat with head down. Oh, these Lawyers how they do trouble people. I do not know that in all my life have I known so much intrigue and plotting for power. I do not know what is going on, everything is so sly . . . perhaps I have not courage enough & must now take my stand & say my mission is from human to human not to a selected few.²

And a few days later, "last Sab. of 1879" Kate again wrote: I am in a net . . . buffeted by Satan . . . I have been to Mizpah again . . . Alone, perfectly alone, so far as earthly friendship is concerned . . . The way is so hard, Oh so hard . . . cannot tell even home friends their hearts would ache so . . .

Sue made it clear that the tiny Spalding house was not large enough for the two of them and made Kate feel like an interloper. Added to this was Sue's unexpected and unrelenting hostility to all of Kate's endeavors. Kate was "bitterly disappointed here"³ as it gradually dawned on her that Sue intended to supervise inflexibly her living arrangements, her school teaching, and all her activities with the Nez Perces. Sue was determined to have not only a new house but also a new school room all to herself. She had been petitioning the board in Philadelphia for such a building before Kate was even considered, and now she intensified the campaign. After many delays the plan was authorized, but not until the embattled young Mr. Deffenbaugh was brought in as a referee. The issue was finally settled by Mr. Deffenbaugh and the two sisters all signing a letter to send to the board.⁴

Despite the bitterness engendered over the housing difficulties, the crux of the antagonism between the women lay in rivalry over their teaching and their students. Sue had good reason to be proud of her theology students; they were becoming leaders among the Nez Perces, filling in some of the vacuum left from the abolition of the tribal chieftains. Outsiders like General Howard and Agent John Monteith had highly

commended Sue and magnanimously excused her teaching of theology along with other basic rudiments of reading and writing. Partly owing to her physical handicap and also because of her pride in the results of her efforts, Sue had become overwhelmingly possessive of the little coterie of "Boys" that met in her home. In more analytical moments, Sue admitted that there was need to teach more than just theology and Presbyterian Church law to guide the Nez Perces into the future that was pressing now with immediate new changes upon them. But Sue's real love was theology which coupled with her missionary zeal dominated her curriculum. The newcomer, Sister Kate, tartly observed that there were too many ministers in Kamiah.⁵

It is entirely understandable that Sue accustomed to running everything in her own way did not welcome competition for students nor any variation in the patterns she had laid out for the Nez Perces. The experiences of her lifetime had conditioned her for absolute control over the mission work. Also Kate having borne Sue's regal authoritarianism for much of her life was no mean adversary. Sue, in this school emergency, called in Robert Williams and sent him to the session with the dictum that none but Christian women were to be admitted to Kate's school. Kate boiled up with righteous indignation in her JOURNAL:

I feel like losing faith in all but Jesus here, religion cloaks so many unchristlike feelings . . . My precious women are getting on so fast and are understanding so many comforting verses . . . but Oh how I long to do more for the multitude, that I see only at church . . . The question so often comes I must do more for the mass and how shall it be done?⁶

Another limitation that Sue placed upon Kate's school by way of the elders was that no woman was to be accepted wearing the native dress. In this one regulation for both their schools Kate could agree with Sue: the men must be taken out of their blankets and cut their flowing locks; the women out of their straight, shift-like, immorally short (knee length!), native dresses. To clothe her pupils as properly dressed Christian women became one of Kate's main objectives. She measured, fitted, and cut out dozens of newspaper patterns for the long-

sleeved, high-necked, flowing, elaborately gored-skirted Victorian dresses.

sewing was one great perplexity . . . [their simple slips were] so comfortable and so easily made . . . [with] only two widths of cloth [that Kate had anxiety to prevent the] troublesome gores [being] in the wrong places.

Miss Kate found this pattern-making onerous because once a Nez Perce woman had mastered the secrets of dress-making, she was not about to turn around and give away this magic to any untutored and envious sister. This new status of wearing white women's clothes was not to be lightly shared with others who also wished to acquire civilization. Despite this early reluctance to share their newly acquired knowledge, little by little the women did take this task upon themselves so that ultimately Kate could report that "I am happy to say, this work of pattern-making grows beautifully less and less."⁷

Knitting, another essential in all orthodox Christian homes, did not pose so many difficulties, because "this requirement was not so easily kept under a bushel" and soon Kate found "quite a number whom I never taught, knitting and getting the heel turned somehow."⁸

As the popularity of Kate's school rose, the limitations imposed by the session increased. Next Kate's school must have students of "high moral" character.⁹ When one reflects on the general puritanical standards of the nineteenth century, it is no cause of surprise that to the McBeths the seventh commandment was "much more important than all the rest."¹⁰ They shared with the great majority of their contemporaries the belief that sex was sin, and sin was sex. When all other devices failed to curtail the popularity and rising enrollment of Kate's school, the proposition was made that only the wives of Sue's ministerial students should be admitted. "Certainly," thought Sue, "here is a method to secure equalization of numbers."

With her deep-seated Scotch sense of justice and her love for all people, it was impossible for Kate to accept all these restrictions without rebellion. Both sisters took their cause to Dr. John Lowrie in distant Philadelphia, and he must have wished for Solomon's wisdom to deal with the ugly rivalry in far-away Kamiah. One thing the correspondence makes definite is that

Kate submerged all her confused emotions in her class of women as Sue had done in her class of a few men. Kate wrote to Dr. Lowrie that her school was "a delightful, sacred spot."¹¹ When she began with them in November [1879], only one knew the alphabet, now by June [1880] all could read in English.

During those first Kamiah winters, Kate sat half-frozen in the little wooden unheated church building understanding practically nothing of the interminable Sabbath services.¹² One of the difficulties Kate faced in learning the strange language was adjusting to numerous speakers occupying the pulpit. Although Robert Williams was the only ordained minister, Kate heard preaching those first months by Peter Lindsley, William Wheeler, Joseph Lowrie, Archie and Jimmie Lawyer, and James Hayes of the "coat trouble." But her devoted pupils clustered around her:

even every inch of the floor was occupied. Sarah, Marks wife [Williams] went with me & sat with me & dear Mrs. Solomon [Whitman]¹³ & Mrs. Felix [Corbett] was near¹⁴ & if our tongue is strange to each other the precious name of Jesus binds our hearts . . . how Methodist like they are in their experience meetings. four Services today . . . Robert [Williams] with his white shirt looked so well . . .¹⁵

Some time later Kate again wrote back to Philadelphia that although she was discouraged about human nature generally (perhaps mainly that of Sister Sue), she still rejoiced in the progress of her women. The mission forced the expulsion of one of the most promisingly bright and pretty girls, Carrie, for living with James Reuben before he went to Indian Territory to raise the standards there of Joseph's band. This deprivation of school did not restrain her from living with him again when James returned the next summer. Kate deeply felt that those capable of education ought to be taught and she apologizes that her school is only a place of "comparative moral purity."¹⁶

Unfortunately for Kate's unpreparedness, her first winter in Idaho had been one of the region's most severe. Now as it dragged itself out toward spring, the weather remained rainy, damp, and disagreeable in the valleys; in the Bitterroot mountains surrounding Kamiah, the impatient miners reported that even by the middle of June there was snow four feet deep on the Warren trail.

How cold that winter was! And only one board between me and the weather! In the spring I papered the board house with New York OBSERVERS, and nice and clean did it look. The white margin neatly matched looked just as beautiful in our eyes, as do the gilt figures on the walls now. (I liked the OBSERVER because the sheets were so large.)¹⁷

The first Fourth that Kate spent in Idaho [1880] the Campbells took the sisters in their "waggen" to the Kamiah camp on the Clearwater River. "Early as it was" they found that Peter [Lindsley] had ridden that morning all the sixty miles from Mt. Idaho with an account of the panic of the whites on the prairie. Remembering all too vividly the events of three years ago when the hostiles had gone on the rampage of murder, the whites were huddled in the fort, expecting the worst. The Christian Nez Perces with Agent Warner gathered up representatives of the tribe from both the Williams and Lawyer camp and went together with Felix Corbett as interpreter to assure the people of Lewiston as well as those on Camas Prairie that their fears were groundless.

In the summer it was those "worldly Campbells" that offered Kate her first escape from the Kamiah Valley since she had arrived with Sue the fall before. Their objective was Lewiston, some seventy miles away, where the women planned to do some much needed shopping. When Sue decided that she could not stand such a long trip, with half-guilty relief Kate planned happily with her friend "dear Mrs. C." a pleasant trip and change of scenery and company. There preparations were made for the two necessary camping-out nights en route, but in August they did not expect to spend

one night in Old Tom's house at Lapwai, had to go there to dry out clothes & blankets after a night of rain. The sun-bonnet & umbrella did not shelter us much. Mrs. C. & I in bed of the waggen so I have had enough of camping out.¹⁸

As Kate neared the beginning of her second year in Idaho, she gradually found herself using more and more of the Nez Perce language. She was taken by surprise one Sabbath morning when she

went to Church expecting to lead a woman's meeting as Billy [Williams] thought the men would be all at Council at Lapwai but when the time came for service only the leading men were absent. The church was full. the Lord stood by me and whether it was profitable or not all things were at least reverential. read in my way in Nez Perce & from the "ah's" at the close I inferred they understood. Some of the old men in the left hand pews were called upon to pray. never asked before. how little the old are cared for . . . meeting at five in the evening over the river . . . Rachel [Pond] read sitting beside me. A wonderful day in the history of NP women. the floor packed . . . dear Mrs. C. [Campbell] led singing in english. the meeting was as is usual a kind of experience meeting.¹⁹

Kate's concern for the older members of the tribe reflects the years she had spent with her mother, learning at first hand the loneliness of old age. Upon many occasions she went out of her way to include the elderly Nez Percés and was always conscious of their needs. Jimmy and Archie Lawyer's mother, "a very old woman . . . took great delight" in telling and retelling to Kate the account of meeting with her husband the Spaldings and the Whitmans when they first appeared at rendezvous, more than forty years before. From Chief Lawyer's widow, Kate heard that Mrs. Spalding was "plain and unassuming . . . with a quiet heart, not excitable . . . so kind, so gentle, so altogether good in the Nez Perce eyes." Old Mrs. Lawyer said: "why she [Mrs. Spalding] could talk quite well with us before we reached our own land."²⁰

Kate envied the facility with which Eliza Hart Spalding had acquired the Nez Perce language and despite her partial success in making herself understood in the September meeting, she continued to feel linguistically inadequate. But even before her vocabulary gave her much fluency, Kate's intuitive heart began to sense difficulties among the Nez Perce people. From a phrase here, a casual remark overheard, a vindictive look of displeasure on other occasions, Kate started piecing together the pattern of the trouble. Thrown upon her own resources, divorced from Sue's help, Kate won with her Nez Perce women not only their companionship but also their confidence. Especially was that

true of those with "wandering hearts" who were repulsed by Sue's austerity. Those women on the fringe of white respectability were the very ones who could give Kate the deepest insight into tribal difficulties. Among their many grievances, the one that gave Kate the most concern was that of the trouble brewing between the Lawyers and Williams families, because it infested her school, the church, in fact, all of Kamiah. She feared it might spread throughout the entire tribe.

Kate vigorously disagreed with Sue's policy of giving Robert Williams so much prominence at the expense of the Lawyers. Nor did she approve of Sue's tactics in dominating the church at Kamiah through her control over Robert and the session.

This narrow way of conferring all favors on the picked few is so different from my understanding of Christs teaching . . .²¹

By the anniversary of Kate's arrival in Kamiah, she was occupying all by herself the Spaldings' old cabin. By now she was feeling somewhat reconciled over the "house trouble" and could

look out of my window & look at the little new Mission house over by the church for *Just One*, can look now without tears or troubled heart & say, yes, it is *best*. Strange! when but the prospective house with all the tales it does & may tell, used to trouble me so. Oh! so much.²²

But with Sue moved up the road conveniently nearer the church, Kate's nights alone were nightmares of fright. Ever since those terror-filled nights in Wellsville when the McBeths' river-side cellar concealed run-away slaves, Kate had been almost paralyzed by fear of the rustling night sounds. And now here she was alone during the dark long hours among this alien people. December found her still alone

wandering around for a place to sleep at night . . . one night at Sue's next at Mrs. C. [Campbell's]. I hummed all day yesterday trying to comfort my heart with "My God, My God, is here & in command."²³

It was in that same December of 1880 that Kate organized with Mr. Deffenbaugh's help the first Sabbath School in Kamiah, probably in northern Idaho. Following Sue's dictates Robert was

superintendent and

did very well . . . was much relieved by the Assist. Superintendent saying She would arraing the girls. poor Mary Johnson so frightened; Mrs. Black Tail Egle no doubt a good woman but could not say a word. Silas [Whitman] William [Wheeler] & Enoch [Pond] I think did very well. to my surprise there sat Archie. Who had been assigned the bible class of men [by Sue?] Oh but human nature has a thin covering here such jealousies & manoeuvring to enthrone & establish Robert even at the expense of Archie. May the Lord come among us this winter & do away with all this.²⁴

Sue was engrossed with her "Boys" and her "manoeuvring," teaching them all to herself in her own house. The damp cold weather along the Clearwater made her lameness much more painfully apparent so that Sue now rarely left her cottage. Week after week her pupils came to her, and Kate was left pretty much alone with her women and the growing Sunday School.

No missionary could have had greater agony of spirit than Kate did during that first year of 1880 in Kamiah. As a newcomer she had no understanding of the Nez Perce language, and many of her women knew just as little English. Throughout these difficult months Sue did not miss an opportunity to remind Kate that she had no business in Idaho.

You have not the training nor the temperament, not even any experience, for work with Indians. You understand neither their language nor them. You upset all my plans and years of my work. Half the time you go about with your eyes red from weeping like that weak Mrs. Smith, whom the Nez Percés ran out of Kamiah and still sneeringly call "The Weeping One." Don't you see that your presence here can only bring disaster on both of us? In Heavens' Name, why don't you go home to Ohio where you belong, to Lizzie and the children whom you miss so much; there you can teach again children for which you are qualified.

Kate before bursting into tears stammered:

God who sent me here is in Command, not you. He has work for me to do, just as surely as He has for you. Even

though I am totally alone with Him in this strange place, like Ruth in an alien land, the Lord will fix some way for me to work truly for Him! Sue, how can we both feel so close to Jesus, and yet so far apart from each other?²⁵

Another alarming decision had to be met late in 1880. Many of the defeated non-treaty Nez Perces, who had escaped capture, came slipping back to the reservation. Their plight high-lighted the worst difficulties the captured Nez Perces were suffering in Oklahoma as prisoners of the government. Sue's students were solicited to minister to the exiles in the far-away hot Indian Territory. In fact, the request explicitly asked that Robert Williams be sent. This appalled Sue, not her "St. Paul of the Nez Perces"! This could never happen for then where would her influence with the Kamiah Church be? It was unthinkable. So an answer was sent off to Philadelphia, signed by the Rev. Deffenbaugh and the two McBeths:

As to Robert's going to the Nez Perces in Indian Territory. Your suggestion was carefully and prayerfully considered. The question was submitted to Robert for his decision with the reasons "pro" and "con," and after thinking this matter over and consultation he decided that it would be best not to go . . . Probably we are selfish, but he would be greatly missed . . . ²⁶

Since Sue's "best beloved" Robert was not to go, his place could be taken by his younger brother Mark. James Reuben and Archie would accompany him as teachers and spiritual guides with far-reaching results in the future history of the Christian Nez Perces. Their salary, \$700 a year, substantially larger than either Sue or Kate was receiving at the time, was a magnificent amount in everyone's eyes.²⁷

In the extremity of disappointment, lonesomeness, and frustration in her teaching, the sole sustaining force for Kate was her deep religious trust. Jesus as he had on the Pacific Ocean became more personal to her:

I shall not want him to forgive me I shall want him to embrace me, if not as shepherd as husband, if not as Priest as King . . . What a delightful soul refreshing & subduing interview through Him I had with the loving Father one morning last week before I arose . . . ²⁸

It is true at times it taxed her will to submit to God's discipline. Here the firm indoctrination of Mary and Alexander McBeth preserved her sanity. Her JOURNAL is filled with struggles to accept and submit to the injustice of the world, this little narrow world between the hills of the Clearwater, dominated by the rigid and unsympathetic Sue. The details of her ordeal to find and accept God's Will emphasizes Kate's extreme chagrin and disillusionment with the politics of missionary endeavors. This is even more clear when one reflects that Kate came to Idaho a middle-aged woman with a firm, tried, and mature religious belief. Kate did not leave herself unscathed in her private thoughts.²⁹

But despite all the heart ache and frustration 1880 had brought both sisters, the last month of the old year was the busiest and happiest Kate had spent since coming to Idaho. Besides teaching her women and organizing the Sabbath School, she was engrossed in preparing a surprise, the first Christmas tree the Nez Perces had ever known. A year ago on her first Christmas with the Nez Perces as Kate sat communing with her own aching lonely heart among a people with whom she could not talk, she had resolved that she'd be ready before another December for a real observance. Now she was happily planning a great occasion.

Early the previous spring, Kate had thought over carefully all the possibilities that might provide some little gift for the many Kamiah Christians. When she heard from back home that friends wanted to help with some project for the McBeths' Nez Perces, she knew immediately that again God had answered her need. Without consulting Sue, who she knew would disapprove of such pagan, frivolous trappings, Kate had written to the women's missionary group in Brighton, Pennsylvania, which she had helped organize. Kate knew that at no time of all the year do people of good-will enjoy doing for others as at Christmas. She also wrote to Mrs. Crumrine in the Steubenville [Ohio] church, where the McBeth girls had attended while they were at the seminary. Soon after Thanksgiving, Kate had initiated her women into the mysteries of stringing popcorn. Like eager children they concentrated intently on lessons in order to conclude the day sitting happily on the floor around a bag of popcorn. Kate ignored the handfuls that disappeared furtively

and was thankful that her limited cranberries were not so delectable. The exciting packages had begun to arrive early in the fall, well ahead of time, and now they were spread all over the Spaldings' little cottage waiting to be labeled. With a plentitude of the most stately and beautifully proportioned ponderosa pines on the mountains about them, the Sabbath School Superintendent [Robert Williams] and Kate had only to concern themselves about locating one that was not too large for the small church edifice.

Oh but the Christmas tree with its little tapers was beautiful . . . made more beautiful with garlands of popcorn and little tapers. When all was finished that Christmas morning, we locked the door and went home. All the afternoon we could see men and women go up and try the door, and walk away disappointed. At last I saw a woman in the distance coming towards home, in the deep snow. I soon knew it was Obie. I met her anxious face at the door, and the question to me was, "When will that good worship begin?"

How fortunate for the McBeths' Sabbath-keeping consciences that Christmas Eve was on Friday:

What happiness! What joy! to the people as well as to the children . . . what a picture they made . . . what a pleasant sight it would have been for Brighton . . . the women with the babies, sitting on the floor in front of the tree. It would have hurt the mother's heart, if a little present had not been handed to her on the end of a rod or pole, over the heads of the other women sitting there, and the long Indian name of her child, which was found on a card attached to the present, called out by one of the dignitaries of the church.

Kate had started the project with her Christian women and their children in mind. Soon her heart changed these plans, for her tolerant kindness could not inflict unhappiness anywhere. Thus this first Nez Perce Christmas

it was not only the Sabbath School children, but every child in the community that must be remembered . . . heathen & Christian got something. 157 parcels . . . about 30 held as reserve & all used but one . . . sometimes it was

only a few threads of bright yarn, or an empty hairpin box . . . how nice to see Archie [Lawyer] & Robert [Williams], the rivals, consulting about some name that we could not pronounce right. Mrs. C. [Campbell] on one side of the tree while Felix [Corbett], Solomon & myself on the other. The pictures, cards, & little presents were beautiful & so justly divided that Billys [Williams] remark to Sue was not a bit to one & \$5 to another but all got the bit.³⁰

As "the sled process . . . with the little Brighton flags on the horses" paraded through the settlement with the waving Nez Perces singing out greetings, Kate could reflect with a good deal of satisfaction that "our new Sab School is going very well" and that

my eyes are not so red as one year ago & after all the grasping for power my school is my own when Mr. D. [Deffenbaugh] announced that any good woman might enter & that I had the authority in my own hands.³¹

As the New Year, 1881, opened, to alleviate Kate's fear of the empty house, Enoch and Rachel Pond moved into the leanto room. Rachel, Robert Williams' sister, was, Kate considered, the "most advanced & likely of my women . . . so much like a white woman."³² But Kate's satisfaction in having secured company and her feeling of elation and joy over the successful happy Christmas season gave way to apprehension.

poor Sue is always in some stew about the government or Church or State. Was there ever an other woman so ambitious to rule. She has I think gone too far the last year even her own Select few think so & she has now manoeuvring to keep them all right. There is not the eagerness to attend School that there was last year . . . We need the Spirit of the Lord to take the selfishness away . . . if I was not sure that God, my God, was here & in command all these ominous signs would be fearful.³³

As Sue had so often intimated, Kate's thoughts in her loneliness frequently had turned to the little white cottage she had left behind in Ohio. A severe testing and sorrow came unexpectedly on a beautiful spring day in April, 1881, when Peter [Lindsley] came from Mount Idaho & brought me

two letters from Sister Mary telling me of the transfer of our little Pet Mary Henderson McBeth Kelloway to heaven . . . for her sake I am so glad she is safely folded. Lizzie says she does not want her back. How changed she must be to be able to say this . . . how lonely dear little Artie must be & Lizzie's tender heart & poor Arthur. May he not harden under this great trial to him for she seemed to be the only one that could reach his heart. I am glad she asked Mamma so often to sing ROCK OF AGES & that she told them she saw the beautiful Gate . . . Oh but my heart is going up for the inmates of the dear old home . . . diphtheria³⁴

Regardless of Kate's own aching heart over this family bereavement, her school activities filled the busy day. Through the back-door teaching of the women, Kate found herself gaining the good-will of their husbands who were

very proud to show their wives' handiwork . . . two of them, who were away at Lapwai, had something hurt their feet so badly that they had to take off their shoes . . .

They knew the bright stripes of their stockings would attract attention!³⁵

Archie and his wife were planning to leave for Indian Territory right after the spring Presbytery, April 21, 1881, when he became the second ordained Nez Perce. The arrangements in Kate's school for Mrs. Archie's wardrobe were made carefully but furtively:

Was astonished to find the two bright faces [Sue and Mrs. Archie?] in school room in council over Mrs. Archie's wardrobe yesterday just as if the unchristian enmity of the scheming winter was all forgotten, but provoking Robert came in before all the clothes could be stored away.³⁶

In May, 1881, Kate had a nerve wracking experience that but for the loyalty and unhesitating fearlessness of her women might have left her homeless again:

I have had a week of sweet nearness to Jesus & assurance . . . My house on fire this week but the Lord sent the Chinaman to tell us while we were translating ROCK OF AGES. Mrs. Kentuck [Corbett] one of those self reliant

calm women was soon on the roof with hatchet in hand while Mary Johnston was in the garret how good the Lord is to me . . .³⁷

This fear of fire continued to plague Kate:

Communion today & church packed . . . Sue out for the second time [in over a year and half since her return to the Kamiah Valley] . . . Not so free from distractions myself as in time past this fear of fire is partly my excuse, a poor one I know.³⁸

The transfer of Mr. and Mrs. Campbell from Kamiah to Lapwai was a blow to Kate, who had been befriended by these fellow-teachers. No matter what Sue's opinion might be about the government employees being worldly, Kate found great solace in Mrs. Campbell's friendship. Kate castigated herself that feeling "God, My God is near" was not sufficient companionship to eliminate "this yearning for human friendship."³⁹ During her earliest girlhood years there had been the three sisters; in Beaver there was Mrs. Cunningham; in North Sewickley, Mrs. Webber; here in her loneliness Mrs. Campbell had taken "a sister's place." Now she too had been taken away, and Kate was desolate.⁴⁰

As the boiling hot summer of 1881 dragged toward "the much dreaded 4th," the women's irritability and tension rose. Kate complained of feeling weak and nervous and bewailed her continuing frustration with the Nez Perce language: "How hard it is to teach in Nez Perce. Lord make much of the little."⁴¹ Returning the hospitality of the Lapwai Christians of the year before, the Kamiah church was host for the traditional Fourth gathering and campmeeting. The preparations were confused and contradictory. Robert as the pastor seemed uncertain and vacillating in his announcements for the coming event. Jonah,⁴² the sub-chief, had invited all Lapwai and many others, even strangers, to the Kamiah observance. It was rumored that George Waters would be with the visitors, "a kind gentle man" so Kate said, but one not heartily welcomed. A Methodist from the Yakima tribe, he was no stranger; quite the contrary, he was well known: "his name had been a household word for many years." It was he with three other young men who had come from Father Wilbur's Methodist mission to the Nez Percés camped that July of 1870 along the Weippe near Kamiah. There these Methodists

had conducted "The Great Revival," which had led to the return of the aged Spalding to Kamiah for the last time. Married into the well-known Nez Perce Timothy family, George Waters had impeccable ties in the tribe, and now that he was returning, the McBeths were most concerned. The sisters opposed not only the Catholics encroaching upon their field but any church representative that was not Presbyterian. Backed by "the good Presbyterian agent, John Monteith," they

acknowledged some anxiety . . . [because] the government had parcelled out the reservations, the Nez Percés were given to the Presbyterian Church to care for."

They feared this influential Methodist Indian would bring "divisions in our churches." Jonah, who had already defected from Presbyterianism to become a Methodist, undoubtedly was responsible for this intrusion of another denomination into Presbyterian territory. Kate prayed that "the Lord be in the Camp whether George Waters comes or not."⁴³

Then there were the strangers: "such men . . . with hair platted in the front & breech cloths on." It was no wonder that with what feeling of anxiety we watched the crossing and recrossing Saturday the Catholics on the other side all came over on Sab to worship & Monday for a short time but returned to have their own feast . . . many of them with flowing locks tucked under warm blankets, warm as it was . . . 400 feasted this side . . . two camps [Catholic and Presbyterian] . . . a word would have ignited the whole . . . the picture of Jonah Chief of Police standing in centre of circle high crowned hat in hand while he delivered his speech and we all standing in our best clothes in obedience to the command of Thomas the crier will not soon be forgotten.⁴⁴

It was well that in August the McBeths found it possible to spend some weeks away from the reservation with friends, among them Kate's "dear Mrs. C." The sisters visited other missionaries, "a dear little Mrs. Parrington . . . and beautiful Mrs. McBean . . . [who] loved their Indians" on the Snake River. In contrast to the plight of these women among "those forsaken down the river Indians . . . perhaps some of our own among them

fishing in Walowa Valley" Sue and Kate returned grateful that the Lord "had cast our lot in a pleasant place,"⁴⁵ like the Kamiah Valley, which even with its torrid heat was more habitable than the bare stones of the Snake River. But their relief was short-lived because when they reached Sue's new house, there on the doorstep was carefully planted a frightening Indian arrow, an ominous evil portent, or at the least a warning of serious danger.

Aquiver with apprehension, they remembered the ugly rumors earlier in the year that ten chiefs had signed a petition to have them removed from the reservation. Nothing had come of it, and their anxiety had gradually diminished even though much of the spring they had both felt "shut in by these mountains in an openly enemy land." Kate was convinced that only "the Lord [can] open her [Sue's] eyes to see she is at least partly to blame for this state of feeling." During one of the church services Kate was certain that Solomon [Whitman] prayed for

Miss Kate first & Miss McBeth in the low back breath. A name so unpopular must be pronounced softly. Oh what an illustration of scheming for self glory. They all have such a sullen look.⁴⁶

In bolstering up their courage the sisters reassured themselves with the memory of the recent Fourth when after the Campbells left, "we two women were . . . alone in this multitude of about a thousand many of them blanketed" even though "the state of things here is not growing any better."⁴⁷ Their final refuge and their ultimate comfort was in the firm conviction that "God is here and in command."⁴⁸

In October there were in Kamiah "many poor white rough men, the R.R. surveyors," who bothered Kate's conscience because she failed to reach them with the Christian message of salvation. Added to her other worries Kate had new school troubles. Despite the independence Mr. Deffenbaugh had granted Kate the year before to manage her own school, now Sue was insistant that Kate's "self-reliant calm," Mrs. Kentuck, be expelled. To enforce her edict Sue instructed her pupil, Enoch Pond, that he and his wife Rachel must leave Kate's house immediately. Kate "came home from Sue's Tues. evening in tears" with "visions of weary nights hunting a place to sleep . . . intending to take it to the Lord in prayer," but before she could

compose herself, there was Rachel saying that Enoch said they would not move, no matter what. The Ponds by their loyalty won Kate's enduring love and gratitude. But poor Mrs. Kentuck did not fare so well, for by the end of November Kate had capitulated to Sue's judgment and in church

bent over & told Mrs. Kentuck not to come to S because Joseph [Lowrie?] had come from Lapwai . . . Mrs. K. angry because she was told not to come to school. It like a dark cloud over the work here, indeed over all this work.⁴⁹

As 1881 drew toward its close, a severe smallpox epidemic broke out in the Lapwai agency and school, spreading over the prairie. Sue said the Lord had taken her through a virulent epidemic in St. Louis and Kate had been exposed in North Sewickley and likewise was certain that God's protection had saved her. Among the whites there was great fear that the terrified Lapwai Indians would bring the scourge with them, fleeing for safety to Kamiah. Rumors aggravated the near panic and exaggerated the rising death toll. Added to the smallpox cases were

many sick from the weather. six of the eight who had small P. in Judes band are dead. faithful old Eagle among them — a historic name for he carried Mrs. Spaulding to the canyon . . . & her two children until Mr. S. returned.

All of Kate's Presbyterian doctrine told her that old Eagle was an unsaved heathen, a lost soul. But in recording his death "under the Shelter of a rock alone," Kate could not help wondering if

He who recorded the names of Davids thirty three worthies will not forget this more than a cup of cold water.⁵⁰

In contrast, there was no uncertainty about Timothy, another victim of the same epidemic. He too had befriended the Spaldings nearly forty years ago and with old Eagle had been entrusted with the delicate mission of rescuing Eliza Spalding after the Waiiltpu massacre. Timothy had remained loyal to his white friends and to his new found religion. He was one of the six Nez Perces who had maintained Christian worship in their homes during the long years of Mr. Spalding's absence. When the missionary lay dying in 1874, Timothy had visited him and had

comforted Spalding by saying:

You are my great interpreter. You were sent by God to me first . . . Now don't be concerned. I will never turn back, my wife will never turn back, this people will never turn back.⁵¹

Now that the "kind old" man had gone to his heavenly reward, the McBeths were in turn comforted knowing that he had left his heritage of Presbyterian-Christianity to his widow and his daughter Amelia living in Lapwai.⁵²

Christmas plans were discarded and the tree was not decked until New Year's, for all the Indians had sore arms from vaccination and were in a sullen frightened mood:

Kati Silas [Whitman] young wife is now lying in the little church a corpse and her baby . . how little did I think two days ago as she sat before me in S S that she was but one days journey from the Jorden which we were talking about. the old women nodded their heads when I said perhaps some of us today are camping on the brink but not Katie, Mrs. Campbells favorite girl . . . I hope she was not vacinnated if she was they will all say it was that. So many sick & frightened about their arms. Enoch [Pond] moaned all night & thinks he must sit with arm by the fire. Some must warm the water to drink.⁵³

CHAPTER 10

MIZPAH INTERLUDE

After their enforced inactivity during the last two months of the old year, both the men's and women's schools made in January of 1882 "a fresh start after the fearful arms that most of them had from vaccination." Kate could rejoice in "how comfortable the Lord has fixed me here with Rachel & Enoch [Pond]" sharing the Spalding's cottage with her, for it was such an unusually severe winter that Kate doubted if she could "have been able for much exposure" to go hunting around every night for some place to sleep.¹ In the "fresh start" of her women's training, Kate entertained at a "shirt starching party" in March and "daily do I see the improved appearance of the people."² Later in the year, Kate was gratified to note the results in Martha Wheeler, who was to accompany her husband on a missionary trip to the Umatillas. Attempting to fortify her inner trembling over the new undertaking, Martha sat near Kate up in the front of the church

with her traveling dress on. her shawl on corner wise &
with the first hat on that was ever worn here into the
church by an Indian woman.³

By now Kate's command of Nez Perce gave her confidence in her school room teaching the women. She considered that "Mrs. S. [Solomon Whitman] seems to comprehend the spiritual part better than the rest" and yet Rachel [Pond] and Mary [Johnston] were also among her star pupils. But it continued to be "an anxiety . . . in Nez Perce English" to appear before the overflowing Sabbath School; Kate

feared so much to venture my exposition . . . lest I make
some mistake . . . how little I can say even with much
thinking.⁴

During the spring because the agent [Charles Monteith or Charles Warren?] was reported to be "playing the fiddle for the

dances," Solomon Whitman was threatening to "session him . . . what a disgrace to be sessioned by this people." In late May the Nez Perce Council meeting in Lapwai voted that Charlie Monteith not be commissioned as the agent; the Council also decided that the railroad should not be allowed to "come through the Reservation." In the Kamiah church there was much shared anxiety over "how wise and busy Satan is" in Lapwai, because "horse racing dancing and the drumming revived again." To the missionaries, Lapwai was "a sad picture of a community which had so many privileges"; they wished that "the Lap community was only like this" and puzzled "what will come out of all this God alone knows." Robert Williams and his Session "endorsed [by] . . . Mr. D [Deffenbaugh] "forbad his members taking part in such activities and urged them to avoid those plagues of Lapwai, the "ungodly soldiers, horse-racing, whisky and other evil influences from which Kamiah is free."⁵

Besides the Wheelers going to the Umatillas, Enoch and Rachel Pond were called by the Spokanes, and again Kate was left alone, bereft at night. "In hopes that Lapwai people may be blessed," the forewarned Kamians and the McBeths traveled for the Fourth campmeeting to Lapwai, "where the long hair & blankets predominate." Three hundred "men women & children with 500 ponies" and "three wagons . . . all there were then in the Kamiah community" made the two-day trip. The two sisters, "we two whites," were cared for by Solomon [Whitman] and Felix [Corbett], who "fixed our waggen into a tent" for the two weeks' camping at Lapwai and the nights en route. During the meetings the camp . . . every morning before breakfast will remain a vivid picture . . . & the evening circle of worshippers around the central fire.

During the Lapwai meetings one of Sue's students, Silas Whitman, who had lost his wife Katie and the baby six months ago, was remarried. But the ceremony which was planned for "the evening . . . in the school building" was disrupted by trouble:

The mother of the former wife . . . expressed herself with the volubility of an angry Indian woman. The fifteen-year-old bride-to-be was not able to hold her own . . . The sin charged was the throwing aside of the old

custom . . . that the deceased wife's friends provide and make all arrangements for her successor. This they had not been given the privilege of doing. Before the ceremony still another came and gave her views, so that when the very neatly attired bride stood before us . . . she did not have the air of a maiden marrying a chief's son. The whites from the government school accompanied them to the evening service where they were given a very embarrassing position, on chairs in front. No wonder the young groom sat resting his elbow on his knee, for close beside him the former wife's mother sat, weeping aloud, piteously.

After the ordination service of the two Nez Percés, Silas Whitman and William Wheeler (April 22), the bridal couple was to leave almost immediately with the Wheelers as missionaries to the Umatillas. The chastened young bride, Martha, "was glad to go . . . as all were against her."

While she was in Lapwai at the agency, Kate arranged transportation to Kamiah for her organ, "a gift from the Lord." It had finally arrived from the East "after a year on the way" and was to become in her life a veritable "God-given organ" and "so much company."⁶

On their return trip Kate called Sue's attention to the grand review of all as they passed us in the twelve miles of forest, between Caldwell's & Cold Springs . . . the women in companies, riding on the little spirited ponies, in bright, loose slips, with short, flowing sleeves, a handkerchief on the head, shawl pinned around the waist and riding man-fashion, hurried past, driving pack ponies before them on which were their good clothing, tent, and provisions . . .

Occasionally there would be a three or four year old child, securely strapped into the saddle, whipping up its little pony to keep pace with the mothers.

The well-dressed men, with gray or linen dusters, broad-rimmed light felt hats, rode leisurely with slackened rein but erect figure, in twos, four abreast, . . .

How different from Kate's initiation at Cold Springs three years

ago when she arrived in the November cold! What a contrast! We were the last to enter the camp. Some of the tents were already pitched and fires kindled . . . The men cared for the horses, while the women put up the tents and prepared the supper . . . [after supper] in the ravine with great trees about us . . . night [came quickly]. A bright fire of pitch-pine . . . in an open space . . . where evening worship was to be held. The little bell was the signal.

How good . . . to be with our own people . . . glad to get home . . . [only] how lonely . . . without R & E [the Ponds].⁷

Although no one could ever quite replace Rachel or fill the emptiness left by Mrs. Campbell, other of her pupils kept Kate busy, happy, or worried. Bright and early on the morning after their return to Kamiah, Sarah [Mrs. Felix Corbett] was on Kate's door step to relate the Fourth celebration in Kamiah. Mrs. Corbett had sent "old Barnabas, the only man on this side of the river" to invite the "old women [and] mothers of the little ones, who had been left to care for things . . . on the little farms" to a feast at her house.

the halt and lame were there, some of them riding ten or twelve miles . . . [they] had plenty of sweets. The children had cherries . . . all helped with joy, and all shook hands before we separated . . . a chief's wife, she knew just how to go about it . . . this was the first woman's party ever known in the tribe.⁸

In trying to help Mary Johnston, Kate found herself in "deep waters." Although Mary could effectively wield an axe in a garrett fire-emergency, she found her mother-in-law one of the great trials of her life. She confided her troubles to Kate, seeking advice and guidance. The old maid Kate turned to Holy Scripture, not daunted by her own lack of personal experience:

What a fright I had this week after my talk with Mary Johnston about heaping coals of fire on her old mother-in-law's head. Sue told me she would think it a charm & take it literally, so I went down to the river & called Mary, Mary & so worried if the canoe had been on this side I think would have tried the trip but either the Lord made

it plain or so dark that she did not see anything in it at all. For the old woman is not burnt at all. Always something to worry . . . snakes, Washington . . . now Robert [McBeth]⁹

The McBeths were just naturally great worriers; they recognized this weakness — "What a worrying family we are or an unbelieving one"¹⁰ —and frequently prayed to maintain greater faith. "Now Robert," their dear younger brother, was the latest cause for concern; he had applied for the post of Indian trader at Yankton, South Dakota. By this time both women were convinced that John Monteith had been correct in his judgment that

very few who obtain the position of trader on Indian Government Military Reserves . . . are fit persons.¹¹

To the continuing sorrow of the far-away sisters, Robert at forty has still not been "saved", had not joined the church. This proposal of his could be the last straw to crush their hopes. If he were subjected to the vile influences of government employees, such as those in Lapwai, his sisters shuddered with the worst forebodings. Often they took their worry to God: "Oh Lord do not let my brother the child of many prayers go on the downward road." It was "a tangible sign to strengthen . . . faith in asking for his soul" when they finally heard that Robert had sent back his license because he had decided he had "no desire to live on a reservation."¹²

If Kate had her worries with the women, Sue was not immune from alarm over the men. At times even the beloved Robert gave her concern; Kate never lost an opportunity to point out Robert's shortcomings. Early in the fall Robert deserted his clerical duties to go off with his family and friends hunting or fishing. Kate hinted that possibly "the old wild life has not lost its power . . . [even] after eight years that he has been the guide to this flock." Mark, Robert's younger brother, had not always "gone as straight" as he should, and "Sue is troubled" over Robert's prolonged absence when "Presbytery Yackamas Synod & Portland school ought to be attended to."¹³

By September, Kate was "sleeping now at McConvilles.¹⁴ Oh Lord make me watchful in a family like this." Although the McConvilles were among the very best friends and helpers the

McBeths ever had in Idaho, they were not saved according to the McBeths' standards. As the shorter days of the fall crept over the desolate Kamiah valley, Kate's anxiety increased about her lonely nights. In October she worried about

who the Lord is going to send to stay in my house with me . . . it is hard to go up & down to McC. [McConvilles] through all this rain

rain, rain every day for three weeks. this empty house seems Oh so empty . . . troubled about who is to stay here this winter.¹⁵

As always with her fear of staying alone nights, Kate and Sue became bitter with each other and Kate confided to her JOURNAL:

Oh what stinging things Sue can say to me. today the tears burn on my cheeks as they have not done since the first year I came here . . . as in the past she is the old lordly Sue it is partly my fault for touching on this unaccountable privation & hunt for company.

How she did long for dear Mrs. Campbell or the Ponds! But the Lord finally solved Kate's hunt for company because by November

Solomon [Whitman] and Mrs. S. are so quiet in Rachel's room. it is their first night here. may the Lord make their stay as profitable to us both as Rachel and E. were . . . it is so good not to have to hunt a place to stay tonight . five months since I slept in my own house."¹⁶

In late September when her house was empty, Kate had moved into

Rachel's room [to sit] beside the old stove [and was] very thankful to have it to sit by [for] by order of Agent Monteith [Charlie] my good stove that Jesus so often sat & talked to me by was given to Parker [miller?] for his bride wife to cook upon."

But by November Kate was approving of Parker's going "to Lapwai to see . . . about the mill . . . the people are so enraged." The McBeths could never hold resentment very long once they were convinced that an individual was sincerely trying to aid the Nez Perces. Both women watched with indignation

the poor people . . . [with] pack trains women & children

. . . go through a snow storm for milling to Lapwai 65 miles simply to carry out an selfish end.

Politics were rife throughout the Reservation, the "S. [school] rations" were still up in the log house while

it was said many of the women are hungry for bread.

What will it be before winter is over . . . what dishonesty is going on."

At Thanksgiving time, Parker's bride wife cooked a special dinner on Kate's expropriated stove and invited the McBeths, Robert and Lucy Williams. Kate accepted the invitation, but "Sue & Robert declined going . . . I do not know if R. had the same reason as Sue."¹⁷

Now beginning her fourth year among the Nez Perces and more at home in the language, Kate noted a distressing "amount of repition in the sermons" of Sue's men. She well knew she dared not interfere, but she did have one avenue of approach, the Sabbath School. Here she was a free agent and here she could attempt some first hand instruction for the Sabbath School teachers. Using all possible diplomacy, Kate enthroned Robert in the seat of honor, "the armed chair," and held the first teachers' meeting, "an innovation men & women" together. Her purpose was "to lead these men & women into clearer light . . . to think upon a subject in a connected and disciplined way." Before anyone arrived, Kate wrote the questions for the day on the board, and then

Robert who is always present translates into Nez Perce & the children, men & women answer. R. then writes the questions for Sab."

Before many months, Kate was gratified to find "how often the sermons have the Sab. lesson in them." Many of them "think they are so wise" that when she thought there should be reviewing, Kate at times was "most afraid to make a suggestion to Robert." At these meetings both James Lawyer and Mark Williams were beginning to pick out hymn tunes on her organ because although it remained Kate's greatest pleasure, she knew her playing "is so limited." Always Kate had to be on her guard:

poor R. [Robert] how he mispronounces it; vine was the vengeance James H. [Hayes] watches my face to see if I notice.¹⁸

Throughout the year there were the usual troubles, misunderstandings, and hurt feelings between Sue and Kate. Although Kate confessed as the year wore on, "In how many things that I thought Sue was wrong at first I see now she was right," she still could not agree with all of Sue's arbitrary decisions:

Billy [Williams] prayed for all the whites today but Sue . . .
Ambition what an empty thing it is . . . Lord do not let us
whites be stumbling blocks in the way of this people.¹⁹

There was always the undercurrent of the Lawyer-Williams disagreements to keep both Sue and Kate on the qui vive.

But the joyous Christmas season of 1882 with its anticipated gathering of friends for the week-long testimonial meetings and the Christmas gifts bound the sisters into a forced truce with their shared childhood memories of the little white cottage:

What a grand refreshing Christmas this has been . . . Oh
how I wish friends could see the packed church, hear
their sweet & powerful voices & the many bearing
witness but how lonesome they all are for their children
. . . Say children in heaven & the tender chord is touched
. . . what a wail went up when Robert [Williams] said
your hearts are lonely for your children . . .

The return of the holiday season brought memories of those who had died a year ago from smallpox:

What a prayer poor Dick made his darling little Ella is
numbered with the multitude from Kamiah.

Besides those in Kamiah, some children had gone away to school in Forest Grove, Oregon, and their absence created additional gaps of lonesomeness throughout the valley. But those children who were still in Kamiah

were treated to the cakes with apples & taffy . . . can see
the boys peering into their newspaper cornicopias
delighted it was something to eat. the old women were
all anxious to get theirs. James [Lawyer] & Peter
[Lindsley] had fun in their faces when they slyly watched
Solomon [Whitman] with his dishpan go down the aisle.
Church again until 11 OC. Mark [Williams] was called
upon to pray first in years . . . [The McBeths hoped that]
all went off at Lapwai — their first tree.²⁰

The New Year's "bitter cold . . . [with] the river nearly frozen over" did not deter the traditional sled procession with little flags waving. But they "did not go past Sues. poor thing how changed & how bravely she bears it." In contrast, Kate was having Mary and Abraham Brookes for dinner but found it difficult to hurry home to complete preparations after church because

Allen, the police man, had his back to the door & enjoyed the hand shaking . . . [Many] stopped me saying Our friend Miss Kate happy New Year.

But in spite of this fortuitous beginning, her dour Scotch temperament again had Kate feeling lonesome and sorry for herself by the end of the month:

If I would allow myself I could be so lonely this dark Sab. evening away off here in this field at the foot of the mountain for Mr. & Mrs. Solomon are away most every evening until late. so different from Rachel & Enoch.²¹

Kate and Sue were not alone in their depression. A general atmosphere of apprehension hovered over the Reservation during the severe winter of 1882-83. By now various political groups were heading toward trouble, and any trouble concerning the Nez Perces' life and government would inevitably involve the missionaries. Sue felt that Kate by recognizing the Lawyers and seeking to strengthen their prestige in the church was courting disaster, was weakening the cause of Christ. On her part, Kate was positive that Sue's policy of supporting the Williams' faction exclusively to dominate the session of the church was the crux of the difficulty. Charlie Monteith, at last firmly ensconced as the new agent at Lapwai, sensing the growth of inter-tribal bickering in Kamiah, charged the sisters with fomenting unrest. At this juncture, although Sue and Kate's inner feelings had not yielded an iota toward each other's policies, they at once closed ranks to meet an outsider's attack.

The two women sought to bury their worries under the daily routine of teaching; besides their class rooms Sue could turn to her dictionary and Kate to the Sabbath School. Kate fretted over "Mrs. K. [Kentuck Corbett?] with her wandering heart" and in the Sabbath School began telling the Bible accounts in story form. This device was immediately popular and the little church

house was packed for "Miss Kate was a prince among storytellers."²² But Kate was not satisfied with the progress of her teachers' meetings, for Robert had gone to Portland to study, and without his leadership, "no questions were asked." With him had gone "so many of the children" to Forest Grove, only twenty miles from Portland. The grippe struck those who remained in Kamiah, and for a week in late April Kate "had . . . all the sick children in charge." Although the Agency doctor made the long drive from Lapwai, he did not remain long to help. Sue continued to lament in her letters to Dr. Lowrie the terrible conditions existing in Lapwai, another outbreak of "blanket wearing." She declared that Robert's church was "a moral police force," the only bulwark against the hordes of encroaching evil.²³

By the middle of May, Sue suddenly announced that she had decided to spend the rest of the summer at Mt. Idaho, that outpost up on the cooler mountains just beyond the southern edge of the reservation. The oldest town on Camas Prairie, it was the most important settlement next to Lewiston in northern Idaho, marking the end of the trail from civilization into the uncharted wilderness. Approximately the same safe distance as Kamiah from the government agency at Lapwai, Mt. Idaho was located at the third corner of the reservation triangle with the added advantage of being slightly more inaccessible. It had been the county seat since 1875, had seen the beginning of the Joseph War, and was dominated by L.P. Brown, a rare pioneer of Sue's persuasion: a strict Republican tee-to-taller. L.P. Brown was Mt. Idaho: the postmaster; the hotel proprietor; owner of both flour and lumber mill; a rancher who ran a large band of sheep as well as one of the first "blooded" herds of cattle of northern Idaho; the leading citizen of property and influence. When Sue made her first decision to establish a base there, less than 100 persons lived in Mt. Idaho, but because of Mr. Brown's influence their mail service was much superior to that in Kamiah. Sue reasoned that with the backing of a man like Mr. Brown, whose beliefs like General Howard's so closely paralleled those of the McBeths', their position in Idaho could be immeasurably strengthened. Through their Kamiah acquaintances, the Monteiths, there was another friend to welcome Sue in Mt. Idaho, Mrs. Wallace Scott,

herself a Monteith. But now to persuade Kate, that sister of hers. Sue did not dread Kate's "stern Scotch way," after all that was to be expected of a McBeth, but the tears — floods of tears — infuriated her. Sue had always scorned weakness in any form, and to have Kate melt into weeping incoherence was almost more than she could bear.²⁴

As Sue had anticipated, Kate "had such a cry" over the first mention of the proposal, that Sue did not even broach the most ticklish portion of her project: money. Kate was appalled at the mere mention of "being the only white woman in the Valley." Two of the government families, the McConvilles and the Parkers, had already departed, and even the Solomons [Whitmans], who had never been as congenial as the Ponds, were moving out of Kate's house. Sue could not indefinitely postpone the real blow: the sisters had a joint savings account for "a rainy day," and now Sue demanded her half: \$312.50. Added to Kate's fear of being alone, "shut off from the world," was now this cause for additional tearful indignation. Because Sue had managed to secure through the church with Mr. Deffenbaugh's aid, a new house all for herself in Kamiah, Kate had expected that this "nest egg" could be used to provide decent living quarters for her. Now Sue was arguing that they should find for themselves a sanctuary up on the prairie, outside the reservation boundaries, "just in case" they might have dire need someday for a refuge of their very own. Kate stubbornly and heatedly opposed Sue's scheme, but ultimately Sue's dominant personality prevailed as it had since childhood. Finally Kate resentfully acquiesced and fled to her JOURNAL to write:

my own poor needy soul. Oh how much bitterness fills it
... will ever the smart leave. Lord fill me so full of the
spirit that nothing earthly will be so keenly felt ... cut
[me] off entirely [from] any human dependence.²⁵

In the midst of the sisters' struggles with each other, two items of bad news came from their distant Ohio home: "the great flood of the Ohio" was practically lapping at the "old hearthstones of the little white cottage" and their "darling pet Artie was sick with scarlet fever." Either catastrophe would have been shattering enough in itself. Both women were desolate and frantically worried, but too much out of sisterly accord to

comfort each other. Having lost the little niece with diphtheria two years before, the aunts' anxiety ate into their nights of sleeplessness. Kate tormented herself speculating that this threatened danger might be another punishment for loving "the dear ones of my own family" too much, and that in her heart "the coming of the kingdom is not first." After what seemed like interminable waiting for another mail, they heard from home from their sister:

Mary says the strangest thing of all is they have never taken a bit of cold . . . in all the dampness which surrounded them . . . living in a house soaked by the flood . . . not strange to me now while my faith is strong.

Artie had also recovered, so the McBeths could take up new burdens once more reassured that all was in God's hands.²⁶

No matter how fervently Kate prayed to be delivered from "any human dependence," she was never released from her need for companionship and greeted with gratitude Robert, when he unexpectedly

returned so suddenly because Dr. L. [Lindsley] said it was not good to spend so much of Miss McBeth's money & the Dr. daughter made fun of him.

During his absence in Portland, Kate had spent her nights with his wife Lucy:

will take my blanket up to Lucy's & lay on her floor if she will let me.

Robert had found great encouragement at Presbytery for the teachers' meetings and reported that the white ministers had said it was "good good to study the lessons."²⁷

The usually dreaded Fourth passed in a "spiritless" manner on the reservation with Mr. Deffenbaugh from Lapwai exchanging pulpits with Robert Williams, which necessitated an interpreter in Kamiah. The great majority of the Nez Perces, as well as most of the white inhabitants, spent this 1883 Fourth in Lewiston at the most glamorous spectacle northern Idaho had ever known. Large crowds converged on Lewiston for the day. Loaded hacks, "rigs" of all types, heavy farm wagons, filled with expectant merry-makers, rolled through the deep dust toward Lewiston. Some arrived the day before from the neighboring towns: Genessee, Uniontown, Asotin, Pomeroy, Alpowa, Waha.

Leading the parade down main street was Governor J.B. Neil, "said to be the first chief executive of the territory to visit north Idaho since 1864,"²⁸ that fatal year Lewistonians claimed the state capital had been snatched from them.

From out the tent I could hear Solomon telling Mrs. Solomon some of the incidents of their pleasant day at Lewiston, where they had been invited to share in the public feasts and festivities given in honour of the governor . . . Two hundred Nez Perces in citizens' dress rode next to the liberty car, and had been treated with all the respect their dignity required, a dignity which forbade their showing surprise at anything they saw in Lewiston.²⁹

The two women heard with fearful apprehension the glowing accounts brought back from Lewiston. They were genuinely worried over those "others," the pagans. What about the great number that were not in "citizens' dress," those who were most gorgeously gotten up . . . One of them . . . had a headpiece for his horse that covered his horse's whole head. It was just covered with beads. There were holes for the eyes, and it was really very showy. His own costume was of some kind of skin trimmed with ermine. A fringe of ermine skins (whole skins) was around the jacket, and about the knees, and down the seams of the sleeves, from shoulder to wrist, and around his cap. Their faces were all painted, all had bows, and quivers of arrows swung at their backs. The quivers were all highly ornamented with beads.³⁰

This was heathendom on the rampage again, battling down the fortress of Christianity that the McBeths had been so painfully trying to rebuild after the debacle of 1877.

In the middle of July it was a relief for Kate to leave the hot dry valley "for the mountains are on fire and the depressing smoke is coming like last fall." This was one of the big "burns" in Idaho, after some pioneers had "let out" their camp fire. Thousands of acres were aflame with weeks of no rain. Each morning, the relentless copper colored sun rose over the dry parched hills and began its travels across the brassy sky. The springs dried up and diminished to a trickle. Near them the majestic pines scattered

brown needles. Through the sizzling day the breathless heat quivered over the valley. Animals were driven down by the heat of the burning hillsides seeking moisture, grubbing about in the yellow grass. The deep dust rolled across the prairies, choking people and the thirsty cattle that roamed aimlessly, digging roots out of the yellowed stubble and licking great holes in dry springs. The dead leaves of the shriveled sun flowers rustled in the hot breeze, fanned by the lazy wings of horse flies. Grasshoppers, like dry leaves, descended in droves upon the shriveled fields. In the noonday brooding quiet, the boiling sun poured down its glare on the defenseless earth and all living creatures longed for the too short hours of midnight relief. Dense smoke filled the valleys, billowing up as a cloud of fire after dusk. The night sky turned an angry, dusky red; occasionally a blaze spurted out on a hill like a beacon light announcing another fresh area consumed by the inexorable march of the flames.

The sisters had arranged to meet each other for their return to Kamiah late in August. Even their relatively short absence in cooler climates had not prepared them for the heat of the flaming Idaho forests:

home again . . . with a sprained foot. got it getting out of the waggen at the top of the fearful mountain on the Mt. Idaho road. but well it was not my ankle for I had to walk the six miles down some of the way Sue on my back. that scene when she lay down & cried & was going to faint & no water nearer than the river had not had but a little water for two days. know now what thirst means. lost on the prairie camped near the thorn bushes but no water. sat on a box all night & Peter [Lindsley] watched his horses. Sue on the waggen seat. started by day break came to the bushes. Mrs. Tip Allahy told us there was a spring found the corral & bushes but no water. on on to the . . . mountain where the great load was rearranged for the descent. Peter did not wait but went on & just at the most disponding time Oh joy an Indian came up the trail. Good little Mr. Enes soon Sue was mounted on the white pony man fashion & he leading the horse & guiding the waggen. Surely the Lord sent him. he even guided through the river, although we crossed in the

canoe, blessed river both for the poor horses & ourselves. My foot did not get so bad at first but it too is in the Lords hands.³¹

The McBeths had so "many calls" to welcome them back that they took heart again that the people "seemed glad . . . that we are back." Finally the blessed rains came and the valley was cooling off before Kate again fled with red eyes to her JOURNAL and to her organ for comfort:

My eyes as swollen today as they were four years ago & from the same cause. Robert [Williams] would not announce my S [school] opening. Solomon would not today said "Billy said no because of Mrs. Jimmie Lawyer. Oh the trouble . . . Although I had made a covenant with Mary & Abraham [Brooks] to live in my house Solomon & wife with their things dumped & said he had been talking with Miss S.L. it looks as if I had not right to school or house or myself . . . my seeming popularity with the people has made me light headed . . . traps are all around me . . . Jimmy L. [Lawyer] shall not live on this side no not if my school should go . . . Oh fill me full of love to thee & then I can love those who dispitfully use me³²

Kate was deeply concerned with the "Monster Jealousy" that was causing so much trouble in both the women's and men's schools. Despite Robert's returning from Portland with high endorsement for the teachers' meetings, now Kate became alarmed over the effect her story telling was having in the Sabbath School; and in the teachers' meetings:

nearly the whole congregation stays in for S.S. [Sabbath School] . . . May the Lord bless what ability I have for telling stories, bible stories to this poor people . . . R. [Robert] does not seem willing to be helped so I will have to do the best I can but cautiously . . . but am beginning to feel jealous eyes are turned away from me for his back [Robert Williams] is towards me. No teachers meetings perhaps I am nearing preaching ground or perhaps Mrs. L. [Lawyer] is the trouble. my school is so full & interesting this year but . . . mine will feel it [jealousy] too . . . what a time poor Sue has . . . she thinks they are using me in the opposition side. how

I do not know but they [the Lawyers] are men & women
even Mechats [medicine men].

Even though Kate realized that Mary Brooks had had her "heart ... set on living with me," she was reconciled to Solomon Whitman's moving in because "Solomon will not be offended like Abraham" [Brooks]. Interlocking, inter-family dissensions and jealousies simmered among the Kamiah Christians. The two Williams brothers, Robert and Mark, were not speaking or recognizing the existence of the Whitman brothers, Silas and Solomon.³³

After long and tearful conferences of accusations and counter-accusations, Sue and Kate buried their differences under the surface sufficiently to write to Philadelphia in each other's defense, refuting the charges brought against them by Charlie Monteith. Kate wrote Dr. Ellinwood in November, 1883, saying that although Sue had been charged with wrong teaching and insubordination to the agent, she had done no wrong. Kate also observed that false charges had been made against her by "ungodly, unchristian men." It is significant that Charles Monteith, brother of his predecessor, John Monteith, and cousin of Sue's good friend, Mrs. Wallace Scott in Mt. Idaho, should be accusing Sue. Only two years before he had asked Sue to write supporting his nomination as Nez Perces agent.³⁴

Even at the Christmas tree there was trouble:

Oh these Christmas trees. think today the snaps [ginger snaps] & cookies the best for yesterday & today I think every woman I see is coming to tell me her little girl or boy did not get anything from the tree. thought when the men wrote the names on the cards in Nez Perce there would be no trouble. perhaps the trouble was around the tree for the new men could not read the writing very well & perhaps many of them is like Mrs. Lukes children [Luke Williams?] have but want more. some of the children got three times . . . No church last night or today not that there is a lack of preachers but too many . . . the weather is miserable . . . my women rec'd not only the usual picture but a ribbon bag today . . . it has been such a rainy snowy day & is blowing so hard . . . ³⁵

Kate came "to believe in the unforgiving character of the race now since he [Mark does] not want to see or speak to Silas [Whitman]," even though he knew he was dying. With the old year Mark Williams, who had lost his beloved little daughter, Katie, only two months before, died and his brother Robert cried out just like a child today at Marks funeral. the Billy [Williams] family have reason to love each other the children of the same father and mother . . . surely the sweet singer is gone.

Mark's wife, Sarah, one of Kate's pupils with whom she had twice lately . . . walked . . . to that spot on the hill . . . went to church . . . dressed all in black looking just like a white widow; hope she will not think too much of dress as I fear some are. Sometimes I fear there is not much grace in any of them since I see so little in the one I used to think had the most [Sue]. love of power seems to be the ruling motive . . . I ought to pray more earnestly for the Spirit of the Lord in my own fault finding heart.³⁶

There were rare occasions when both McBeths longed for the past as "a blessed spiritual time when . . . [they] could not understood word or look" of the complexities on the reservation. Even the Solomon Whitmans sharing Kate's house were cause for concern; she feared she had "puffed them up . . . [made them] tyrannical" with too much attention, leading to the difficulties with the Williams family. Solomon attended Jimmy Lawyer's New Year's feast "that gives Sue much trouble." At times the man next door was so "boisterous . . . managed everything about the church . . . such fast talking" that Kate "covered up her head" in her room fearing what blasphemy she might hear any minute through the thin partition.³⁷

In February "Solomon & Mrs moved today" and although Kate dreaded being alone, she admitted "how often this anxious winter have I longed for this day to come." In such periods of depression Kate reiterated her doubts:

I do not see the use of keeping always the same women in S. [school]. some of them are as pompous as the men now.

Following the devastating fires of the summer before, the winter was bitterly cold, and because "poor old Billy [Williams]

thinks he has made wood & fires and swept long enough" in the little church, it was so unbearably cold for three long Sabbath services that Kate organized "a wood hauling party." Only four attended to enjoy the feast afterwards that Kate had prepared. The sprained foot from the harrowing trip last fall gave Kate much pain during the cold weather, but both sisters could rejoice that the interest in their school still "kept up" and Kate added:

13 in my school today although the snow is knee deep even Mrs. Lawyer³⁸

No single aspect of their controversies had caused Kate more heartsearching or Sue more stubborn resistance than Mrs. Jimmie Lawyer. Sue was certain that Jimmie and his wife were rotten apples in the barrel of consecrated Kamiah Christians and that they made it difficult for the "church band." But Kate was just as obstinate in her defense:

Mrs. Jimmie Lawyer . . . was one of my new pupils this year [1884]. Sister thought she ought not to be in school at all, that my views are too liberal, but I could not see how I could refuse a good woman a place there because of a plotting husband . . . I have never had a pupil more anxious to learn domestic ways than she . . . Wish you could have seen her look of intense interest as she stood in the circle around my kitchen stove while that emblem of sin [yeast] was made. She was the only one who accepted my offer, "Any one who will bring the corn meal, I will teach them how to make dry yeast."³⁹

It is no wonder that Mrs. Jimmie Lawyer won Kate's heart with her enthusiasm over yeast, for the "yeast subject" was to trouble Kate for years. Classified with their habits of dress, the Nez Perce women's reluctance to "give up the time-honored flat-cake" perplexed and bothered Kate, who struggled manfully to convert them to yeast. Two years before "Mrs. Wheeler [Martha] and Fannie Hayes saw how to make bread yesterday but they like to do the easiest ways."⁴⁰

If from the perspective of a hundred years later, one cannot be too sympathetic with Kate's zeal over "gored skirts" and "yeast bread," they can appreciate her campaign for "personal cleanliness." That very first cold winter in Kamiah, Kate had

thought

one of their greatest needs is soap . . . I decided when the trails were open in the spring to send for some concentrated lye. I had seen my mother make soap . . . A pack pony was sent to Mount Idaho twenty miles away . . . on the road back, when crossing the river, the pack pony was carried down some distance by the current . . . the next day in the school room, 'I was glad it was not drowned, for Miss Kate would have had to pay for it.' The soap was made and each woman carried her portion of it off in a little bucket, to dry in the sun.

Just as Kate had proposed with the yeast-making, she now promised that if a woman would save grease or meat rinds, she would

go to her home and see that she gets through the soap-making all right.

Only one woman responded, Mrs. Kentuck [Corbett], who had

the whole skin of a pig hanging up waiting for us in her house nice and clean . . . she had killed the pig herself.⁴¹

After Kate had painstakingly looked up numerous scriptural injunctions referring to "personal cleanliness," Robert preached a stirring sermon in rebuttal for

he looks upon it as hindering entrance to Church putting burdens on them they cannot bear . . . [but] they ought to wash their heads . . . truly perhaps it was for Silas [Whitman] too he preached.⁴²

In answering Dr. Lowrie's implied criticism that she should not "overlook . . . the domestic," Kate summarized for him the problems and her attempts to modify the women's lives. Her common sense approach to the basic difficulties indicates that Kate was well aware of the danger of shallow, superficial surface remedies:

you have the right view of the Indian question. Their false ideas of dignity & labor require much patience to change — with the male portion at least —

When I think of the improved appearance of women and children in the last few years . . . am much

encouraged. The same word (with a different prefix) would express my feelings after visiting them in their homes, but saying we white women would not do any better with as little to do on perhaps. [I] find them washing a dress in a tin pan or [in] a running stream. their farms provide food & enough to sell for the groceries & very plain clothing. They are *indeed* industrious for providing for the winter. Sister thinks that a great improvement. The most of them [are] ambitious to be respectably clothed in the Sab. School, beyond this only *the few* seem to care. I cannot see how there can be much change in their homes until they take up larger farms & are helped some to begin farming on a larger scale & the men willing to work out in the field without the strong arm & cheering presence of a woman *ever near*. The boys & girls away at S. now will come back with different ideas doubtless.

Kate was deeply troubled by the illness of Mrs. Kentuck [Corbett], the "self-reliant calm woman" who was the heroine of Kate's fire and who had persevered in the soap making. Kate appreciated Mrs. Kentuck's courage, common sense, and loyalty and had valiantly tried to defend her to Sue, to reason with Mrs. Kentuck over the problems of her "wandering heart." Kate was with her frequently during her protracted suffering and attempted to comfort Mrs. Kentuck's father Bartholemew, who said he was now "naked of children." Earlier he had lost a little girl and only recently had buried Lydia, who had been "living unmarried at Lapway led off by a tinum." During her final illness Bartholemew led in prayer while Kate held Mrs. Kentuck's hand and wished

although I think even now it was best for Mrs. K. to stop S. [school] . . . how glad tonight if there never had been any need for it. perhaps the pressure brought to bear on me made me see things colored.

Kate recalled that Mrs. Kentuck during the last year had grown in Christian virtues, "guarding against selfishness and jealousy":

Even Mrs. Kentuck, who used to look so black at Mark's wife [Sarah Williams] (remembering past wrongs), has during the last months almost daily lifted the tekash,

with the little baby in it, put it on her old enemy's back and opened the door for her to pass out.

In her sorrow Kate was comforted that Mrs. Kentuck has no grudge in her heart towards me for it [keeping her out of school] . . . how loving she gazed all over me . . . holding my hand saying over & over My beloved Miss Kate.

From Lapwai came other sad news; the young wife of their friend, the Reverend Deffenbaugh, "a devoted wife & mother . . . a perfect housekeeper," suddenly died leaving her grief stricken husband with their sixteen-month old baby boy. "Oh dear this life is so short there ought not to be so many unpleasant things in it."⁴³

But the McBeths' days were not all filled with such "unpleasant things." At the Spring Presbytery in Lewiston, Robert Williams conducted the Sabbath School, and

Solomon [Whitman] says was not ashamed. they are never embarrassed, never.

After Presbytery, the Wheelers returned to their Umatilla Mission, Martha "perhaps as pleasant a young woman as in the tribe," fully recovered now from her inauspicious beginning as a missionary bride after the tumultuous wedding before her first departure. Sue could glow with satisfaction over Robert's achievements and was working hard with other of her students because three of them, James Hayes, James Hines, and Peter Lindsey, were to appear for ordination before the Fall Presbytery. Kate found satisfaction over Martha's poise: "I think she makes a good missionary." Late in June Kate noted that she had

much freedom . . . in the review . . . [of the Sabbath School lesson for] my large class of women . . . even although Sue sat back by the door listening to my Nez Perce. the third time she has been in church in two years. comes on horseback.⁴⁴

The Fourth of 1884 was notable for the arrival of James Reuben from D.C. with the reassurance that the hostiles would be returned from Oklahoma. Because he was not at all one of their immediate flock, it disturbed the McBeths that he "has made such an impression in the East." Most of the Kamiah celebration

consisted of the "Billy Band" [Williams family] and a great deal of talk on "the old subject of the Lawyers, Lawyers."

Poor Robert said yesterday [in church] July was from the world but that Christmas, New Years & Pic Nic was from the bible that Christ was born Christmas, baptized on New Years. poor things how much they need to know yet.⁴⁵

As the heat of the summer clamped down on the Valley, Sue decided not to go to Mt. Idaho as other years until "the arrival of some of the Home Board." Neither of the sister's dispositions improved with the sizzling temperatures, and Sue threatened to write to Philadelphia to the dignitaries that Kate had not taught the wives of Sue's missionaries

wifely duties & civilized ways & that she [Sue] needs a woman teacher for the wives of her men . . . I have failed to follow her directions . . . Oh Oh the bitter tears are coming . . . I am standing in the way of the Lords work . . . the letter will go down to Mr. D. [Deffenbaugh] who knows what I have tried to do and knows it has been so very hard not to interfere with her men & he knows [she told] her men not to come again . . . true the women in their lessons are not very advanced but how can a woman with nothing to read or work with all the outside work to do . . . Marthe [Wheeler?] in her prayers always spoke of this Earth as a dirty place, Peter L. [Lindsley] as a sweating place, but to me it is a plotting place & Oh Heaven will be sweet free from it. there we see straight and together my sister & I.⁴⁶

Sue carried out her threat by writing Dr. Lowrie of Kate's willfulness and all the trouble it caused in Kamiah. According to Sue, Kate had put her school under Mr. Deffenbaugh's care, but a mere youngster like him, inexperienced as he was, could not possibly understand all that was at stake. Sue continued:

Teaching the women to understand talk in English would have been such a help to our boys through their wives, but she [Kate] wanted to learn the Nez Perce from them, their wives. She wanted the women entirely to herself, even out of school.⁴⁷

Another *tinum* in Kate's school needed to be expelled, causing

much disturbance. This time it was the wife of an ignorant man, and she grew so much wiser than her husband that she left him for a wise man who already had a wife. Sue complained about Jimmy Lawyer's wife whom Kate refused to ban from her school even though "the elders did not want Jimmie and his wife in town." According to Sue's long account to Dr. Lowrie, Kate even had had the effrontery to tell Robert that it was unwise for just one band to control all the affairs of the church! The Lawyers were a good experience for them! Jimmie and his wife made friends with the pillars of the church, causing much anxiety for Sue. All the long politicking late at night caused Miss S.L. McBeth to be physically weak and ill, but she concluded on a triumphant note:

Miss McBeth's pupils are all hers and nearer to her, if possible, than before the storm.

The mutual sisterly venom and the unrelenting heat got the better of Sue's resolutions to remain in Kamiah until the important visitors arrived. In her preparations to flee to the cool Camas Prairie and Mt. Idaho, Sue made another will. Ever since her stroke in St. Louis, Sue had insisted that her own death was imminent and had enjoyed making and remaking wills. In Kate's opinion . . . she has much to give for she is at no expense for clothing or anything but her food.

In discussing the provisions of her arrangements the morning she was leaving Kamiah, Sue stood on the bank of the Clearwater while they were swimming the horses [Kate] stood back of her, while she speaking about how she was to be buried I said 'I did not care where or how I was buried but did care to be so far away in life from my sister . . . her answer was I had put the barriers there . . . the question often comes if she dies will I regret I stood out against her wishes about Mrs. L. [Lawyer] I am I think doing according to Gospel. Jesus would not refuse her a place because of her husband.

suppose Sue is resting in Mr. Browns pleasant hotel . . . true it is she is a faithful Miss. [missionary] but she thinks no one else does anything.⁴⁸

In retaliation because Kate felt so resentful over Sue's caustic criticism about every aspect of her beloved school, Kate took a

vicious but understandable delight to upset Sue in pointing out every possible flaw in the results of Sue's teaching:

[James Hines] is a good natured, gossipy old man, and very subservient to Mr. D. [Deffenbaugh] through whom favors reach him but would be a poor spiritual guide. Shortly before our mission'ry boys left us I had to send him word to stop preaching that there are horses literal in heaven (from Rev. 6th, I suppose). My sister heard of it in Lapwai, and others heard it elsewhere. It seemed to be his favorite sermon; suiting the tastes of so many of his audience and chiming with their old superstitions.⁴⁹

Shades of the Fourth of July pagan wicked races! Their spirit had seeped into even the McBeth churches! The Reverend Hines would surely have had sympathetic understanding with a Nez Perce whose prayer Kate quotes:

Oh Lord, Thou knowest to many of us heaven is far off
and the horses are so near.⁵⁰

Following the custom of other summers, Kate spent her vacation [1884] with Mrs. Campbell, but she went with a troubled heart from Sue's parting shot because "what can I do is a question night & morning to better their living conditions."⁵¹

After the McBeths had returned in the fall to Kamiah and the normal routine of their life there had started again, Kate's worst forebodings about her popular Bible-story telling materialized. Peremptorily Kate was taken from her large class of women "to remove one affront" and given only "one seat full of . . . pupils," so she had to wear "my glasses to hide my red eyes." Solomon and his wife moved back into Kate's house for the coming winter, and Kate welcomed Mrs. Solomon back to her

weekly little S. [school] which S.L. [Sue] is anxious to reconstruct after she has flattened it & purged it of the two objectionable ones. wants me to take the wives of men she nearly names or in other words names my scholars. so the plea for neccesity for a teacher for the wives of her men means just nothing. Oh bitterness.⁵²

Six weeks after Sue had maneuvered Robert's taking over Kate's large Bible class, Kate wrote in her JOURNAL that it was still "hard to get it fixed" because

R. will not teach it if I am near. he seems anxious to have me take it. Oh how much I hear that is not correct & it will be so while they are so limited. poor things they are safe on vital subjects.

But Kate insisted that she was "willing to take anything or be silent if only the people may be strengthened in truth." Even on into the New Year Kate continued to lament that

the S.S. [Sabbath School] which was so hard for me to give up has gone on only two days [that] I have been silent. R. [Robert] throat was not strong enough . . . how much this poor people need bible knowledge. the native ministers need more help than they are willing to receive.⁵³

Deep snow arrived early in the 1884 winter, so the McBeths welcomed Solomon's sled to take them to church for the Christmas festivities, which could be "such a nice time . . . if all were only one heart." But this was a different brooding Christmas, a sad one:

not like any other Christmas. something wrong among them. no sled riding or happy time not even the usual feast . . . but one tent pitched. the worship seems spiritless. what is it. the tree is to be New Years eve. I am in the midst of marking the beautiful things but Oh how I would enjoy the help & security of some friend like Mrs. Campbell . . . will this be my last Christmas among them . . . how much more comfortable the people look in dress now light callico dresses & linen coats were the fashion then. now good dresses & overcoats & many of them Arctic shoes. Mrs. F. [Felix Corbett?] wore her hat for the first time . . . now all the S.S. teachers wear hats . . . I spent the evening with poor dying Hellen Kaine. Oh how limited my Nez Perce seems when trying to talk of Jesus to those who will soon be past the hearing. Give me a good heart and tongue Oh Lord & wisdom in a perfect way.⁵⁴

"With such nice things" coming from Fulton, New York, and from the two towns in Pennsylvania, Bridgewater and Brighton, the New Year's tree was beautiful and exciting but there was the doll difficulty. not enough dolls although 31

beautiful little bonnets & bags, but I doubt if anyone feels the least grateful for any of the things. & such nice bonnets & aprons for my women. Mrs. E. who has not been in S [school] for a year made her appearance, of course expecting her present. Mrs. L. [Lawyer], Lucy & all the expelled ones received all the same.

A special event of the evening was a wedding:

how long they have held out. the bride had one child in her arms, one under her blanket & I think two of the older ones were sitting on the floor. two couples stood up together the next night. Men both had blankets on.⁵⁵

The disturbing and troublesome year of 1884 dragged to a dismal close with grim forebodings for the coming New Year.

CHAPTER 11

NINE-PIPES

Ominous portents of the memorable year 1885 reached far beyond the Nez Perce Reservation, for in March occurred an eclipse of the sun. Many whites with better opportunity than the Nez Percés for understanding the phenomena were struck with fear and terror that the end of the world was imminent. Sue held several extra conferences with Robert to explain this coming event to him so that he in turn could prepare his congregation. Both teachers devoted most of the day to the happening:

What a beautiful day although the morning clouds troubled us so fearing we could not see the Eclipse of the sun, beginning here at 8½ A.M. I smoked a piece of glass & sent Mary Johnston out to watch the sun from the kitchen window. in her usual quiet way she said "wako" ["now"]; then the next thing was to move out some seats & whenever a woman or little girl rec'd her darkened glass she took her seat as an observer. Sent for Mrs. Peter [Lindsley], fearing she was alone & notwithstanding Robert gave it out yesterday, many would be afraid. Peter followed; he & Mrs. Calebs sat on the stiles. Mrs. Felix [Corbett] thought her glass very poor & poor Mrs. Calebs eyes were so sore from crying she could not see very well. Sarah [Williams] was glad to be among them as for Fanny Hayes & Jane they had little to say. After we came in I tried to explain the phenomena, placed Mrs. Sol. [Solomon] as sun, I was the earth & Delia moon, revolving around me, then the sun as the centre of our system was put upon the board. now tried to show them the greatness of the Maker & preserver of all these works & our littleness but like ants. We read 14 verse of 1st Genesis, saying they should be for signs as well as seasons... read the great eclipse preceeding the coming

of Jesus. After Solomon came from S. [Sue's School] I could hear Mrs. Sol. do as she always does tell him everything she gets & found Sue had explained it all to the men . . . as I was walking up by Billys this evening met Billys mother & with all her independence as she rode past said yes she saw it but she had little heart.¹

All through the spring of 1885, Monteith had struggled to secure the recall of the McBeths from the reservation. From the entries in her JOURNAL, Kate was apprehensive from February about

the gossip . . . [they?-illegible] are going to send us off. I fear there is more back of this. such a place of scheming.²

Each sister was certain most of the trouble was caused by the other one. As Kate recorded on April 2, 1885:

A letter has been rec'd from F.B. [Foreign Board] telling of the Agent's complain to Dr. L. [Lindsley]. what will the Dr. think . . . I fear there is much more than the Agents complaint . . . from the air of my white neighbors. Poor thing, poor thing, my heart is always saying, but no word of warning would be taken. She [Sue] has pursued daily and hourly the Enemy [Lawyers?], that the wonder is that the crisis did not come long ago. Will this matter go to Pres. [Presbytery] for investigation and will there be a called Pres. as in the Spalding case. Oh Lord forbid and if John Mon. [Monteith] oppinion is given. my two dreams a month apart is strange indeed. Will I be sent off too. Oh how many questions my aching heart is asking. God the All Wise only can answer . . . let the heart of us both bow and say it is Just, right and good. I would not exchange my front seat in church for the fine cushioned one in the East, let me say even if the tears will come Thy will be done thy will be done.³

Another month and the sisters still could not "draw aside the curtain" as Sue had written twenty-four years ago from the midst of her Choctaw dilemma. Now again they were frightened, for there surely "was something concealed," and they both had "much less courage" than if they had been able to "see the danger in its full force."

not a word from Dr. L. to Sue yet . . . Do not understand Mr. D's silence [Deffenbaugh] . . . Do not know what changes may come or are to be made here.⁴

The naturally domestic Kate, really loving nice appointments and surroundings despite her sister's gloomy forebodings, took encouragement from:

what a pleasant little S.[school] I have had this winter & it has been profitable to them I think the quilt & quilting the croket [croquetting?] & the baking. think nearly the whole community bake light bread now . . . everything pleasant with Mrs. & Mrs. S. [Solomon] this winter.⁵

With a buoyancy of happy spirits, despite the overhanging cloud of uncertainty, she wrote in early June:

My house never looked sweeter than it does today. My box wash stand, splasher & glass looks so nice & the many pretty things sent by dear friends out today for Mr. Defenbaugh & brother are to come up with the Agent & as Mrs. Sol [Solomon] is still in my house will invite them to stay with me . . . but Oh how depressed in spirits for Daniel told there was to be some great preacher from the East to send us off the Reservation. perhaps in answer to Agents request. think often of the two dreams I had a month apart. She [Sue] only escaped with her life. Oh that it is folly to plot & counter plot anywhere. where can we look but to the hills whence cometh our help.⁶

The real blow fell on them four days later, when Kate's front seat was a very uncomfortable and unsteady perch:

Oh Oh the Sabeth trial of the Agent before so many strangers about the white teachers. I wonder how I sat through it on my front seat. had no idea until now that I was accused of meddling. his last words were he would use all means in his power to rid the Reservation of such influences. God help us for Man would swallow us up.

Sue saw his letter to the Department [Washington, D.C.]

It is hard to be sure what letter Sue saw "to the department" for the one on file in the office of the Commissioner of Indian Affairs written by Charles Monteith is dated July 21, 1885, well over a month after Sue is supposed to have seen it.

Sir: Although the task is an unpleasant one, still I feel it to

be my duty to recommend, that the Misses McBeth, (representatives of the Board of Foreign Missions, Presbyterian Church) be removed from this reservation without unnecessary delay; And in so recommending, consider I am only acting for the very best interests of this tribe.

In stating my reasons for this action, I will commence at the foundation and work up. During late agent John B. Monteith's administration at this agency, from the spring of 1871, up to the time that Miss S.L. McBeth moved up to Kamiah, (the eastern station on this reserve) the various bands which comprise the N.P. tribe were as one family, so to speak, peace, harmony and good will reigned supreme. Protestants, Roman Catholics and irreligious factions, were on the most friendly terms with each other.

Shortly after Miss S.L. McBeth had established herself at Kamiah and selected a few young men who would obey her dictations, such friendly feelings and intercourse commenced to disappear, and in their stead fanaticism & factional trouble arose.

This state of affairs gradually grew worse, until it embraced the whole reserve. Commencing with the people of Kamiah and the Catholics between whom Miss S.L. McBeth succeeded in breaking down all friendly intercourse, she turned her attention to Lapwai and brot about the same state of feeling between the people of Lapwai and Kamiah, so that friendly visits between the two sections were almost unknown. Not content with what she had done she succeeded in dividing Kamiah itself into what is known as the Lawyer and the Williams factions, so that the feeling which now exists, is as bitter as can be found in any community made up of Protestants and Roman Catholics. It seems as though her desire was to build up an aristocracy at Kamiah and the only way to succeed was to bring about factional disturbances.

Miss S.L. McBeth has not been alone in this work. Her

sister Miss Kate C. McBeth has proved a valuable assistant. Both have repeatedly interfered with reservation affairs through the Indians.

When Inspectors Gardiner & Ward were inspecting this agency, they advised me to remove them from the reserve without delay. Had they been men, I would have done so, but on account of sex, have hesitated, and to the detriment of the tribe, and the service. I feel that further forbearance would be a crime, and am not willing to stultify my conscience longer.

Late Agent John B. Monteith also my predecessor Mr. Warner, had the same trouble to contend with. Both were on the point of, at different times, of asking said removal but did not feel equal to the task of entering upon a controversy of this kind. I do believe the very best interests of this tribe demand their removal from this reserve.

They have caused a feeling of enmity to spring up and grow, which cannot be eradicated for years to come, in fact — in my opinion — not until those that are at the head of the factions have passed away.

That said sisters have interfered with the operations of "the Court of Indian Offenses" and the police force, can be clearly established; that they have exerted themselves to prevail on Kamiah Indians to go before inspectors, while visiting this agency and enter complaints against their agent, and ask the appointment of a new agent, can be proven beyond a doubt. Patience has ceased to be a virtue, hence I cannot allow their actions to pass unnoticed.

Neither of the sisters can make any promise of good behavior in the future, that would have any weight with me. I have lost all confidence in them, instead of instructing the people in Christian love and duty, they breed dissension in the strongest sense.

They have outlived their usefulness so far as this tribe is concerned.

If the Presbyterian Church wishes to continue the work in which they have engaged, on its behalf a minister should be sent here, who has a wife and who will attend to their legitimate duties . . .

In conclusion, I have to refer to their school reports, herewith, to which I cannot certify. While at Kamiah last month, I obtained information concerning the actual average attendance at their schools and I find that the average attendance is less than $\frac{1}{2}$ of that stated. The work and the results of their labors as represented by them is highly colored.

So long as they are allowed to remain, they will breed discontent, and now that a portion of Joseph's Indians have returned, they should not be subjected to such influence.

I am aware, that I am liable to array a certain church influence against me; nevertheless, I consider it my duty to do everything that will tend to advance this tribe's industrial pursuits, Christian civilization, and law and order.

Believing the Misses McBeth to be barriers in said work, I respectfully ask their removal. Very respectfully,

Charles E. Monteith
Indian Agent⁷

Concurrently with the fear and dread of the action Agent Monteith was taking against them, the sisters had to face another undercover attack on them. Ever since Robert Williams' enviable appointment soon after his ordination in 1879 as pastor of the Kamiah church, the dissident Lawyer brothers had centered their attack on him. Even before Charlie Monteith struck, late in May a relative of Jimmy Lawyer's, a "Martha," accused Robert of "Pchwit of the heart." Although both Sue and Kate maintained that this charge of misconduct was spearheaded by the Lawyers' enmity, Kate had anticipated trouble three years before when she had recorded in her JOURNAL:

the tide of unpopularity has set in against Sue the stand she took in the M's [Martha's?] case would not let it be

investigated. I fear much injury done.

The McBeths could not have been the only ones who knew, but when the trouble broke, Kate adds, "it never came out until now." Martha claimed that this had happened "three years ago when they were in camp . . . this ought to cure the going off & camping in a common tent. it seems all trouble comes at once." Robert had to appear first before the Tribal Council of "10 judges . . . the head Judge is an old bitter enemy [Jimmy Lawyer], who fined him \$100. When Robert attempted to conduct Kate's confiscated "large class of women" in the routine of his clerical duties, his humiliation was completed for "all but one woman went out." Kate predicted that this crisis would divide the church even though "his poor wife [Lucy] does not doubt him."⁸

Two weeks after the Tribal Council had heard Robert's case, he had to go "on trial before the ministers & elders of the whole reservation." Even Mr. Deffenbaugh and Agent Monteith traveled to Kamiah for the hearing. Much to the McBeths' relief "Mr. Deffenbaugh

show[ed] that he is not to be put aside without some difficulty & Presbytery is still back of Mr. D . . . Mr. D. has done wonders to stand for the defense so bravely & conduct the whole thing with such dignity.

None of the Nez Perces had ever known of such procedure as "swearing witnessess . . . or the other witnesses sent out & one at a time examined." Solomon [Whitman] reporting the events marveled at "the wonders of the day."⁹

Even though Robert Williams was acquitted by the church and had escaped the worst punishment desired by his accusers, still the fine of \$100 hung over his head for "the sins of his heart," which could only be rescinded by the Nez Perce Tribal Council that had imposed it. Because "J [Jimmie Lawyer] is one [of the 10 judges]" the McBeths assumed that

of course he will be condemned. poor fellow, how rich in humility, love & I hope in faith he will be when their fierce storm is passed & we, Sue & I ought to be the same for the same storm encircles us all. I think in my case without cause . . . God help us or we are gone.¹⁰

The McBeths in their difficulties with the agent joined forces with Robert and banded together as persecuted martyrs of the

Lord's work. While they awaited word from Washington, D.C., on their case and Robert's retrial by the Tribal Council, another Fourth intervened. In these crises as Sue could resort to her dictionary for comfort and release, Kate turned to domestic chores:

Tired been baking all forenoon for 4th July dinner. 200 cookies & snaps & perhaps few will be under the great tent which I see up back of the church. very likely R. [Robert Williams] & Felix [Corbett] doing the work themselves, nearly every man at Lapwai Camp-meeting . . . I do not much wonder that they wanted to go for the exiles from Indian Ter. will be there . . . All fourth[s] have been times of anxiety & this 4th my sixth here seems the one in which there is most to be anxious about the cause of Christ & Ourselves if they should be spoken of separately. Sue yesterday from Felixes talk with [Alikawrd — legibility?] thinks the matter is not over . . . Robert must pay his fine & then the Appeal to Washington will start an investigation into the troubles here. it is so good to feel God is able to confound the Counsels of Ithuriel [legibility—?] & restrain the enemy who has it in his heart to send us from the Re. [Reservation] disgraced with all these clouds around . . . but at times I feel he will let this go on & from it establish a more liberal state of things.¹¹

Few indeed were "under the great tent . . . back of the [Kamiah] church" on that notable 1885 Fourth because at Lapwai the lost sheep, the exiles from Oklahoma, had returned the month before to the fold, the reservation, after eight years of imprisonment. Of all the Fourth celebrations they had endured in Idaho, none had found the sisters so deeply agitated, immersed in their own and Robert's troubles. It was most unfortunate that at this particular Fourth the McBeths could not have buried their personal worries and unbent their rigid Calvinistic austerity to join their good friend the Reverend Deffenbaugh in the prolonged celebration of the captives' release. Except for the small "Billy Band," as Kate called the Williams' faction, practically the entire Nez Perce tribe was in Lapwai to greet the exiles in June. The McBeths' absence then

might have been excused, had they attended the Lapwai Fourth celebration, a continuation of this notable Homecoming.

Had they too traveled to Lapwai, just possibly their relationship to the Lawyers and their followers might have taken a new turn. Five years before when a plea had come to the Christian Indians asking that they come down to "the hot lands" to succor and lead their brethern into the fold of Christianity, Sue had blocked Robert's answering this call. James Reubens and Archie Lawyer, also Mark Williams, had gone instead. Thus once they were back home, many of those returning fell naturally under the Lawyers' influence in Kamiah.

"This scene of a century . . . the joyous and yet sad spectacle" undoubtedly would have moved the McBeth sisters to "tears of sympathy" as mothers and sisters sat down to mourn for those whom they hoped to find, but who, they learned, were lying in far-off graves.¹² Neither Sue nor Kate could ever by the wildest imagination have been classified as "the most cruel-hearted Indian hater," and yet by their remaining in Kamiah during this great Nez Perce reunion, they sacrificed a great reservoir of tribal goodwill and cut themselves off from understanding a vital experience of the non-treaties, who were now among their people on the reservation.

To the July issue of THE FOREIGN MISSIONARY their co-worker, George Deffenbaugh, sent a very graphic and sympathetic account of this event. He explained the bitterness and the fear of the whites in the neighborhood and on Camas Prairie about the return of these hostiles. Because of this animosity, Chief Joseph and his principal aides were sent two hundred miles north to the Colville Reservation. It was also to mollify the prevailing white sentiment that a detachment of fifty armed soldiers from Fort Walla Walla was ordered to conduct the Indians back to the reservation, although

from the first, it was apparent to most of us that the fears of trouble were not well grounded . . . the news of the return spread like wildfire among the people.

The failure of a boat on the Snake River delayed the arrival of the hostiles from the first anticipated day, Friday, until Monday, June 1, when

early this morning men started to town with ponies & wagons sufficient to convey people & baggage to this place [Lapwai] only so many . . . as necessary . . . should appear in Lewiston, while the people in general should assemble here . . . to receive their friends. It was expected that the company would reach here about 4 P.M., but long before noon the people began to assemble by scores . . . About 3 o'clock there was a stir among the groups sitting in the shade of the cottonwood trees . . . In twenty minutes . . . a large semi-circle formed; men & women standing eight and ten deep, to the number of five hundred. Presently the wagons containing women and children came on the grounds, followed by the men & boys on horseback. After alighting they took a position along the diameter of the half-circle . . . 116 in all. Everything in readiness, hats were lifted, and Elder Solomon [Whitman] stepped forward and offered devout thanksgiving and prayer. This was followed by a short address of welcome on the part of the Church by Rev. Silas Whitman. Following him, James Lawyer made a similar speech, as representative of the civil authorities. Then an earnest response was made by 'Tom Hill.' . . .

At the close of his speech, hand-shaking began, which lasted for over an hour. Headed by [Deffenbaugh] the long procession of our people filed past and took the hand of every man, woman and child. Friend met with friend, fathers and mothers with their long-lost sons and daughters. It was very touching to watch the play of features . . . Only one who had a heart of stone could have stood by and not entered with spirit into the joys of the occasion.

Near the end of the line a different scene . . . Some having taken the hands of all present, and missing the faces of those they had hoped to see, gave vent to their sorrow in uncontrollable weeping. Certainly the most cruel-hearted Indian-hater could not have stood by unaffected . . .

After the hand-shaking was over, the company gradually dispersed, while the tired travelers went into camp on the grounds, as directed [by] the agent . . . in the shades of evening, they have assembled with the Lapwai people around their camp-fire worship. Eight years ago they took no part nor interest in the worship of the true God. They have been led in a way they knew not. Their new camp is a place of Gospel hymns and prayers.¹²

Many a Nez Perce that evening participating in the first campfire worship may have wondered why neither Sue nor Kate had taken any part or shown any interest in this homecoming. The great majority of the Kamiah church and of both their schools, men and women, were there, many taking prominent parts. Right then a second dissenting church was born among the independent and bruised Nez Percés.

During these worrisome weeks, Kate was miserable with "aruezpelas" [erysipelas] and tried to "be grateful . . . it is not worse." The mounting heat increased her discomfort, as it always did Sue's blood pressure under stress. But their little world buzzed on with activity and a multiplicity of crises. Each summer brought new assignments for Sue's ordained ministers and their wives, Kate's "women"; it was a time of much searching of hearts and motives. None of the missionaries welcomed going to the Spokanes; after two years with the Umatillas where they had been happy, the Wheelers were re-assigned to the Spokanes, and despite their reluctance gave evidence to the McBeths of the true Christian "submissive spirit" in accepting the call. This was the season too for the older pupils to come home from school at Forest Grove, Oregon; Kate in her adjoining room could "hear [Charlotte Whitman] laugh . . . she shows her training. what they all need." But even the unaccustomed sound of a young girl's happy laughter made Kate's heart ache for "dear Nancy's [Lindsley] sake." When the first rumor had reached Kamiah about the sudden death of the Lindsley's daughter, Amelia, Kate had hoped "it is not so. how they love their children. all their affections centre in them . . . a young woman about to graduate . . . fell from a high window . . . & was brought home a corpse." Among those who did return was James Stuart; he had been taking courses in civil engineering; and now he was

back to start farming on the reservation.¹³

With many of the native ministers back in the Kamiah Valley, the church was full of new preachers in the pulpit, replacing Robert, who remained under a cloud of uncertainty. The McBeths rejoiced that Moses [Monteith] answered those in the Kamiah congregation who claimed that they feared to take communion from Robert's hand because his guilt would pass on to them. But in his sermon

a needed one . . . Moses showed this could not be.
everyone stood in the judgment for themselves.

Then James Hayes, Robert Williams' "son in the Lord" used as his text "where Jesus told his disciples they would be brought before the Judges." Before the crowded church

many of the Joseph band & Lapwais & Umatillas on the
way to the old Kamas ground . . . he rose & "*tamapiket*"
[confessed?] how heavy his heart was that our minister
was without home.

The McBeths appreciated James' bravery "in showing his heart to R [Robert's] enemies." Kate concludes her account:

he [Moses] has had a good study with the Mother
[Sue]; today I thought with all her faults what a great
work she has done. they are so sound in doctrine.¹⁴

Within another week, July 19, the McBeths were thanking their God that

Robert was not condemned by Lapwai Council [Tribal]
but sent home free . . . R. questioned out of Confession
of Faith, faithfully has she [Sue] taught it & as faithfully
did our father cling to it . . .

In recording this latest triumph in her JOURNAL Kate concluded that

I ought to be ashamed of my little faith . . . the worst is
past for him [Robert] (but not for us) but He who was
able to deliver One is able to deliver two more . . . in the
midst of all this sorrow the Sisters hearts have been
drawn together, answer to prayer . . . although hard
perhaps it was the only way.¹⁵

In the midst of their open break with the agency official, their doubtful future among the Nez Perces, and their worry over the incendiary Williams-Lawyer feud, Kate and Sue gained some

comfort from each other and once again tactically closed ranks to meet the outside enemy. Any criticism of either one's work or usefulness by an outsider immediately drew from both of them letters of mutual defense.

It is only natural that antagonisms had developed between the sisters during the first six years of Kate's Idaho experience while they were stationed together in Kamiah. Before Kate's arrival, Sue had reigned supreme as the queen and "little mother" of her "Boys." The school of theology she had established was unique on Indian reservations. Sue sought solitude, and when she was not teaching, she devoted herself to her Nez Perce dictionary and to a voluminous correspondence. She was scholarly, methodical, serious in outlook, organized; in contrast Kate, warm-hearted, impulsive, domestically-inclined, enjoyed humor and sociability. From these different temperaments and view points, frictions were inevitable. Sue ruled the Kamiah church with an iron rod through Robert Williams, her most successful and accepted student, "her best beloved." Kate, from long years' experience with Sue's domination, was perverse and independent enough to enjoy seeing some of these well-managed plans meet with confusion. At times Kate had even abetted the confusion.

After Jimmy Lawyer's fearless, intelligent, and loyal leadership at Kamiah which helped save the terrified whites in 1877, it is hard to explain Sue's growing favoritism for Robert Williams. Whatever feeling or convictions that underlay Sue's partiality, Robert Williams was unquestionably considered by her to be her most satisfactory student. It is not at all unusual that in any lively class rivalry would naturally arise. But this rivalry developed into an intense feud between the witty, imaginative, and argumentative Lawyers and the more plodding, unquestioning and receptive Williams brothers. The sons of Old Billy [Jonathan Williams], one of the patriarchs of the Nez Perce tribe, the Williams had inherited no tribal prestige or presence of authority as that which the Lawyers exercised.¹⁶ Old Billy apparently had no great popular following, but his cooperative spirit, his long memory into alluring vistas of the past, and his constant search for Christian truth endeared him to the McBeths. It is not at all surprising that as Robert developed in

church affairs to follow Sue's counsels to the letter of her dictation, in others' eyes he became her favored one for all preferment. In Sue's judgment the Lawyers could do no good. When Archie wished to have a Nez Perce hymnal printed, she opposed the undertaking. Although he had been "picking out" tunes on her melodeon and was able, according to Francis Redfield, "to sing the air" of hymns eight years before, to Sue, Archie was not worthy of consideration. She wrote to the Lindsleys in Portland that Archie had "no musical talent, could not learn to play a simple tune and knew nothing of the rules of notation."¹⁷

In contrast to the Williamses were the two Lawyer "BOYS," aggressive and eager to live up to the highly respected reputation of their father, Chief Lawyer, who had died in 1876. They considered themselves and were considered by the tribe to be "to the manor born." Chief Lawyer, a Christian, had for long years thrown all his influence toward cooperating with the whites and had been the acknowledged leader of the treaty Indians on the reservation. He was following his father's example when Jimmy Lawyer helped guard Sue and the other whites fleeing from Kamiah eight years ago. When through Sue's influence, Robert Williams was ordained and installed as the first Nez Perce minister at the Kamiah Church, the Lawyers were furious to be left out and ignored.

They were sharp, witty, highly intelligent, and natural leaders. Both brothers worked closely together, and what one could not concoct in tribal political intrigue, the other one could. Coupled with this, they possessed a fierce sense of independence and a deep veneration for the old traditions and history of the Nez Percés. As sons of the former chief, they had a social poise and assurance that made them the equals, if not the envy, of all. Archie and Jimmie were incapable of accepting Sue's or anybody's domination. These two brothers revolted against Sue's manipulating the affairs of the Kamiah Church. Their temperaments added to these characteristics a sporting sense of humor which made them delight in baiting the serious Sue McBeth and particularly the solemn stodgy Robert. Their special antipathy burned against Kamiah's Nez Perce minister, the subservient pastor, Sue's mouthpiece. To the Lawyer family, the

Williamsses were nobodies in the tribe. In Sue's school, the Lawyers were quick to learn the ways of Christianity and even quicker to understand the governing rules and by-laws of the Presbyterian Church. They and their families were the only people in Kamiah capable of meeting Sue on her own ground. Devoid of any sense of humor, Sue could never understand the pleasure the two brothers took in harrassing Robert Williams, the scapegoat for Sue, and in upsetting her well-laid projects for the Kamiah Church. Kate, having felt the same way about Sue for years, readily understood the Lawyers' objectives and at times expressed open sympathy, even some slight amusement at their successful tactics. All these smoldering forces in Kamiah were ready to break into open flame and needed only the right spark to set them off to ignite the reservation.

Although 1880 had marked the expiration of the treaty which eliminated the chieftanship officially, both Archie and Jimmy continued to conduct themselves as chiefs — at least as sub-chiefs. With the abolition of the chieftanship, the honor was transferred to tribal judgeships, tribal policemen, or ministers and elders in the church. If the way of preferment in the church was blocked by the Williams' faction, the Lawyers then determined to concentrate on the only other avenue open: the government positions. Meantime, keeping the church in as much turmoil as they could, the Lawyers' power and influence were not to be underrated.

All of these cross currents of personal jealousies, striving for power and status by whites and Nez Perce alike, the Williams-Lawyer tug-of-war, and Agent Monteith's seething resentment against the McBeths were a fuse that touched off in Kamiah and on the Nez Perce Reservation an explosion that was to reverberate even to Washington, D.C. Such dramatic issues were finally detonated at a most unexpected celebration.

The popularity of the pagan Nez Percés' Fourth of July celebration had always been a constant terror to the McBeths, who did all they could to counter the heathen rites of horse-racing, gambling, war dancing, exchanging wives. Like other missionaries, they introduced a rival celebration, but the allure of the pagan Fourth seemed invincible. As a counter attraction, it occurred to Kate to suggest a gala picnic. Doubtless, both sisters

had happy childhood memories of "pic-nics" as Kate spelled them, when the family picnicked together on the banks of the Ohio. Although the Indian women in the summer had for generations gone camas gathering in the Weippe and on Camas Prairie, it was not simple to explain to the members of the Kamiah Church the reason for a picnic. To a people who had traditionally lived all their lives out of doors it did not make much sense to make a special occasion for spending just another day in the open. Kate relates that:

I talked this over with Robert, the pastor. He said, 'We will try that when the berries get ripe in August' meaning the black and huckleberries. When the time came for him to make the announcement, a picnic was hard for him to describe. No wonder — when he, himself, knew so little about it. He told them they were to take their food and spend the day at a cold spring on the hill or mountain eight or ten miles away. Any one could go that wanted to. He saw a perplexed look upon their faces and said, 'It is just like fourth of July, but if you do not want to go — stay at home, and be silent,' suiting the action to the word by putting his hand upon his mouth. Gestures and words go together very gracefully.

And thus it was that a tradition began in 1884, but not without ill omens:

The week before that picnic two large snakes made me a visit. I might say, they were in my house, for the woodshed, where I saw them, was attached to the house ... The larger of the two got away. The other one was killed — but not by me. Its age was 'nine rattles and a button.' I had an exciting story to tell my sister, who said, 'You had better not talk very much about them. The people will say the Te-wats [medicine men] sent them.' I found out she was right, for many serious-looking men and women came to me on the picnic-ground, to inquire into particulars. With shrewd looks and nodding to each other they said, 'It is the work of the Te-wats' ... I laughingly said I was not afraid of the Te-wats. A very reckless expression, they thought then.¹⁸

The trouble from the Te-wats did not occur, not at that first picnic in 1884.

So for a second time, another picnic was planned for 1885, on July 28. Now that the Nez Perces had found out what a picnic really was, it sounded like a brilliant idea to them and they were delighted to perpetuate the custom. A naturally leisurely people, they could now see much more sense in this enjoyable manner of spending a day than in the white man's usual working day. Despite the unfulfilled evil omen of the snakes, an unfortunate location, and the threatened curse of the Te-wats, the first picnic was a happily remembered occasion. Careful plans were made for this second picnic at a more appropriate location. Robert announced it with due ceremony again in church. He gave careful directions after Kate and Sue had busied themselves with detailed plans for him to relay to the congregation.

July 28 dawned sparkling and clear, ideal picnic weather. With Robert's trial safely over, and silence as far as they knew from D.C. about their own fate, Kate was determined to put all serious worries behind her. Just for today she would indulge in light-hearted merriment befitting a gay picnic. She wrote in her JOURNAL:

along the trails, now by the rim, then in the mountains, single file, with the people in their gay clothing and pretty ponies, both before and behind me, fording the river six times, the great mountains swelling [over] the grain fields of the beautiful valley, I thought I would write many letters from it, but little did we know what the day would bring forth.¹⁹

This was Kate's picnic — Sue was not able to ride to such an inaccessible place. As the men had gone to kill the beef for the barbecue, the women were busy in the arbor made for the table, laying out places and setting out their food. Always loving little children and usually having a room full of children when their mothers were studying, Kate knew intimately each one's name and habits. As she visited, listened, and exchanged pleasantries among the women, a little band of happy frolicking children followed her through the grove. For an hour or so Kate went about greeting one group after another; later she estimated that

more than five hundred were there. Her heart overflowed with gratitude and thankfulness for this joyous gathering. She was certain much good would come of it. All seemed gay and happy; the Nez Perces under McBeth auspices were picnicking exactly like all proper Americans in a holiday mood, and they were finding it good. This festive occasion with so many returned exiles present might well cement the tribe under the Christian influence of the Kamiah Church. No location in all America could afford a more perfect setting than here within sound and sight of the beautiful Clearwater River under majestic Ponderosa pines.

When all of a sudden pistol shots were heard and [we] soon found the [tribal] policeman had attempted to take Alex H. He resisted. Nine Pipes and Dick came to his help. Alex was shot in the head and fell as dead. Nine Pipes shot through the body. For a time I did not know what was to come of it. Perhaps a general fight and I the only white on the ground.²⁰

The crowd milled about; Yellow Bear talked wildly. Tom Hill, the tribal chief-of-police, appointed by Agent Monteith, proclaimed defiantly that he and the police were acting under the law, that Alex had resisted arrest, that Nine Pipes had interfered unlawfully.

Robert pushed his way into the center of the excited crowd. "Stop!" he commanded firmly. "Leave our picnic grounds, You Police." The police did withdraw temporarily but frightened the people again by returning mounted on their horses — "their speeches . . . made in the saddle . . . thought perhaps they might be struck in the back." Finally with Jimmy Lawyer and his followers they all left to report to Charles Monteith in Lapwai. The wounded Alex

in leggins & flowing hair tied behind . . . rose & walked to the river stopping every few steps. then there was great hollering for the people to get away from . . . him . . . they have a superstition [if one] looks upon one shot with a gun or pistol . . . [he] will die.²¹

Nine Pipes lay now naked and dying nearby but "he wanted to take the hand of his friends for the last time."

The day that had dawned so brightly with so much promise



was now gloomy with fear, clouded over with thunderheads rising above the moaning pines in the rising wind. The aroma of the half-cooked beef began sizzling under a splatter of big rain drops. The panicky women scurried about hastily gathering up cakes and pies and hungry whimpering children. The long arduous descent winding back toward home began in the ominous storm. Kate's spirits were now more dampened than her clothes:

All this trouble from horses & wealth, horses, horses. [Yet] how kind of Mrs. S. [Solomon] mother to give me her pacing horse to return so that I am not so tired as before. Such a picture loping along in a hailstorm, fording the river, when at its worst. No wonder the men under the shelter of a tree laughed as I came up on the other side, clothes wringing wet from rain sunbonnet dragged in around my face and knees [astride] hard to keep covered by my wet clothes.²²

Troubles blacker than the storm from the mountains were brewing for Sue and Kate. Charles Monteith, even though conscious of a "certain church influence against me," was an outspoken brave man. He could not have suspected that the Presbyterians prodded on by the Misses McBeth would be able to array such effective political influence to reverberate to high government circles of the nation's capital. According to A.F. Parker in the NEZ PERCE NEWS, Agent Monteith had overstepped his authority when he had appointed Tom Hill, "a wretched renegade of questionable loyalty," as tribal chief of police. Tom Hill was no stranger to anyone on the prairie or to the Nez Percés. With his father, Tom Hill had been with Joseph's people during the 1877 war and afterwards in Oklahoma. His experience gave him knowledge of and influence with the Nez Percés, the Crows, the Flatheads, and the white men.²³

To be sure, Charles Monteith was not the only person impressed by the emotional Tom Hill. In the current FOREIGN MISSIONARY of that very month, the Rev. G.L. Deffenbaugh writing about "The Return of the Nez Percés" had recounted that the spokesman "on behalf of the returned wanderers had been Tom Hill, whose

heart was too full for him to command his words, but as it

was, he had a most impressive speech delivered with matchless oratory. He touched on their long confinement in a dreary land, a land of many sorrows; spoke feelingly of their constant longings for their mountain home, which they had given up all hopes of ever seeing again; humbly acknowledged the goodness and mercy of God in permitting some of them to stand once more on the banks of the Lapwai in the presence of so many old-time friends; referred gratefully to the interposition of the Church and the law in their behalf, and closed with the announcement that their only desire now is to be henceforth law-abiding people and believers in the God of heaven.²⁴

In the midst of her own worries, Kate too had remarked about Tom Hill's apparent repentance and determination to lead a new life:

Some of the Joseph Band were in church Sab. and in the evening Tom Hill spoke of their sorrowful exile and how full of praise his heart was for Gods goodness in bringing them back. Then he went down full length on the floor, his mouth literally in the dust and offered his prayer of thanksgiving.²⁵

Monteith gave a weak defense for the appointment, but because of Tom Hill's emotional instability coupled with his ardent anti-white convictions, even the agent's friends had to agree with his enemies that it had been a very unwise selection for a position with such potentiality for trouble. Monteith highhandedly kept reiterating that he was guided in Indian affairs by the authorities in Washington, D.C., and by precedent, but not by local white critics.²⁶

It was a calm hushed Communion Sabbath morning when the news spread through Kamiah that after lying for two days on the picnic grounds Nine-Pipes was dead — "two days to repent." His mother, "our good Elder Jim's wife," who had for some weeks been very poorly, had died at noon, a few hours before her son. At sunrise as Kate "stepped from my door for water," she saw three horsemen, who had ridden all night from Lapwai, "put handcuffs on" a witness. Later that morning, "feeling [like] the old Covenanters, not knowing but blood would be shed perhaps

at Church," Kate attended services but persuaded Sue not "to go out, for she would be a good mark from behind the bushes."²⁷

The Nine-Pipes murder, such a brutal miscarriage of justice, gave Monteith exactly the opening he was seeking. At once he led the Lapwai council to decree the expulsion of Sue and Kate from the reservation and to condemn and reinstate the former fine of \$100 on Robert Williams "for a sin of the heart."²⁸

In all these trying circumstances, the chief culpability of the sisters was in allowing their own differences to spill over into their two schools in Kamiah, fostering a bitter rivalry. Kate's warmer and more charitable nature had rebelled against Sue's favoritism. This had fanned the long-standing factions among the Christian Nez Perces in Kamiah. Now there was no choice; they must leave.

CHAPTER 12

ANOTHER EBENEZER

The murder of Nine Pipes at that July picnic marked the end of an epoch for the McBeths. The shooting precipitated investigations of the Nez Perce Reservation in all its departments. Agent Charles Monteith lacked the judgment and tact which his older brother John had exercised. The mission of the McBeths could not have been successfully continued with the rivalry and dissensions that had prevailed the last six years. The system of Indian courts and police needed a new scrutiny. By autumn of 1885, the reservation experienced a searching round of inspections from investigators of the government, of the Presbyterian Church, and of the local courts.

Before she could be ordered off the reservation, Sue left Kamiah at once for Mt. Idaho where she had in previous summers established connections to escape the intense heat of the Kamiah Valley.

Went over Wednesday, found Sue packing. She said there was no other way, we must go as Agent is supreme. Said he announced that I was his enemy but did not specify . . . have been expecting Police every day to notify us to leave. I cannot yet realize this can be possible, for I am innocent of charges & feel certain I cannot be found [guilty] among the people . . . poor Sue how it is telling on her. fear when it is over she will be down; now brave & writing her defense to Washington. in all this darkness I feel my prayers of last year are answered, our hearts drawn together . . . accused of causing insubordination to authority. Lord save or we perish is our Peter-like prayer . . . God be merciful to us all & give us forgiving hearts — what a great work Sue has done here. Robert & James [Hayes] are monuments but what of mine?

Have just come from Sue's packing up. expect to start for Mt. Idaho tomorrow. Poor thing she knows she is bidding goodbye to her beloved K. [Kamiah] will she reach Mt. Id. her strength seems gone. was there ever so devoted a Missionary. I have just played on my God-given organ, 'I Know not what awaits me & it is well.'¹

Sue was up at four o'clock dressing in the gloom of the early morning with an aching heart, preparing to take another trip in the heat and dust of late summer. By the time the sky was streaked with light, she could hear and see her "Boys" rounding up the horses. She had her belongings ready, her trunk strapped to the back of the hack. Her other possessions would have to wait for pack mules later. The best hours of the early morning freshness were gone before Sue was ensconced in the hack. Leaving her parched but beloved Kamiah where the pitch oozed out of the pine wood boards on the steps of her deserted cottage, the carriage rolled through the deep dust toward Craig's Mountain. As the horses started the long climb up from the Kamiah Valley, it was steaming towards its noon day temperature of 115.

Within the next month, Sue was established at Mt. Idaho in the very house she had purchased for just such an emergency. Only a day's journey from Kamiah, on cool high Camas Prairie just off the bounds of the reservation, Mt. Idaho was beyond the jurisdiction of the agent. Here her "Boys" could come to their school which was now liberated from the political pressures of Lapwai and from the factions thriving in Kamiah.

Not as forthright in making decisions as Sue, Kate vacillated about remaining the only white woman among "the people . . . with heads down & no one wanted to see us." Anxious over many rumors, frightened and uncertain of her own future, Kate worried:

Oh how bitter bitter. When can we get out of here and will there be any investigation or simply the command, "GO!"²

As she had the year before, Kate again went to visit her dear friend, Mrs. Campbell, who had always been able to help her, even if only by listening sympathetically. Because she had lived in both Kamiah and Lapwai and knew personally all the

complicating tangles of the web, Mrs. Campbell was able to steady Kate with courage and practical advice. Even though Kate returned to Kamiah with her heart still sore and apprehensive, the two weeks away from the lonely hot valley somewhat restored her spirits and confidence. Still not "knowing what awaits me" because no official notification had come with any legal authority demanding the expulsion of the McBeths from the Reservation, Kate remained in Kamiah, alternately weeping and packing Sue's belongings. Usually the more amenable of the two women, Kate had in this instance incurred more of the agent's venom than Sue. She was incensed by the charges cited against her: first, interfering with the course of tribal justice, and second, seeking a new agent.³

The government had instigated its study first. Its fact-gatherers tried to be accurate and careful, because as Charles Monteith well knew when he demanded the expulsion of the sisters from the reservation, it was dangerous to arouse the ire of the strong and politically potent Presbyterian church. As usual, the slow-moving government machinery took a long time to announce its official conclusions. For Kate in Kamiah, these were weeks of nervous tension. At last the long-awaited report was made public; R.W. Hill, the government inspector, weighed the differences between Charles Monteith and the McBeths and wrote to the Acting Commissioner of Indian Affairs that he was convinced that it was

quite possible for zeal not tempered with discretion to be a positive injury to the very cause which it desires to promote.

He also recognized the

deep seated antipathy to what has been called the Church Management of the Reservations.

And although he realized that Agent Charles Monteith's charges were "exceedingly grave," he nevertheless recommended that because of their combined successful years of past service to the Nez Percés, both Sue and Kate be allowed to continue their labors on the reservation.⁴

It wasn't long after the government edict that Kamiah again reverberated with another rumor that "some great preacher from the East" was to investigate for the Presbyterian Board of

Foreign Missions. Sue was apprehensive that she had no entree with this stranger. From her life-long vantage point as a Presbyterian insider, she wrote rather haughtily from Mt. Idaho to Portland to inquire "and who is the Dr. E.?" She did not know that their inquisitor was none other than a cousin of the first Mrs. Spalding, one who already knew a great deal about the Nez Perce mission field.⁵

During September, Dr. Ellinwood spent four whole days in Lapwai interviewing everybody except the McBeths themselves. Even the man the McBeths considered their special enemy, the miller John Crea, "the root of all this trouble," was called from Kamiah to Lapwai to give his testimony. Almost hourly Sue in Mt. Idaho, Kate at Kamiah, watched for Dr. Ellinwood's arrival. Kate even worried: "Will Dr. E. come alone? Oh how am I to entertain him?" But he departed without as much as knocking on either one of their doors. Both sisters were crushed with disappointment and resentful of being ignored. They had not even been given the opportunity to state their case. When the verdict was delivered, it amounted to a reprieve: Sue to remain at Mt. Idaho to conduct her school there; Kate to move to Lapwai to start all over again, to work with women.⁶

In all the confusion of charges and counter charges, of agency and Presbyterian Church inspectors gathering the opinions of friends and foes, the sisters could only rely on a strong unwavering trust in their personal God. Mr. Deffenbaugh was in the East, again "bringing home his bride." Most of the McBeths' Indian supporters disappeared into their mountain hideouts and into silence, leaving only a few women behind: "What a silence reigns in this Valley." On "another beautiful Sab." morning, the first one in October, when Kate arrived at the little frame church, she was

sure Billy [Williams] was glad to see me enter alone —
for no one [Sue] would face [?] him for hunting
Robert."⁷

Both Sue and Kate deplored the change, were angered and chagrined by Ellinwood's disposition of their case.

It is well that the two women never saw the report of September, 1885, that Dr. Ellinwood took back to Philadelphia,

signed by Dr. Ellinwood, C. Monteith, C.E. Bibby, and the miller, John Crea. With no personal commitment, Dr. Ellinwood summarized the main items of the testimony he had gathered. Sue McBeth opposed the Court of Indian Offenses set up by the Indian agent [Charles Monteith] and proclaimed that her followers were amenable only to the church; Robert Williams was her mouthpiece and through him James Lawyer had been excluded from communion because he was a judge in the Indian Court; Miller Crea testified that Sue had told her Indians not to cut and haul wood for the grinding mill, that the government could pay for it; the Misses McBeth had for two years lived in bitter enmity a mile apart; they will not go to church together and Sue had said that the hotel at Mt. Idaho was not large enough for both of them; Kate had complained to Miller Crea about her sister; even though lately the animosity had been less bitter, it still existed; there was little value in their work except nuisance for neither conducts anything like a real school; Sue had had only 3 men pupils daily, never more than 8, but her report had claimed 10; she encouraged her men to shirk work; in her earlier years she had done better but now her usefulness was at an end; Kate worked with the older women in a desultory way, accomplishing little; both women belittled the work of the other one with good reason; they had circulated a petition against Charles Monteith and recommended the appointment of Mr. Bowers [L.P. Brown?] of Mt. Idaho; the government school in Lapwai had been reduced from 60 to 10 by the sisters' interference.

Despite their bickering, the McBeths both loved Kamiah, their pupils, and the members of the little Indian church. Sue was especially heart broken to leave Kamiah:

poor thing, her [Sue's] heart is in K. [Kamiah] I know but no one could tell her in all these years it would come to this.⁸

In the Kamiah church, Sue had established a church home satisfactory to the McBeth religious ideals. The wrench was a severe one, but much good was to come from it. Out of this disruption came distinct advances. "God had really disposed" for better in Nez Perce Presbyterian affairs. Most important of all, the two sisters became at least partially reconciled. From the

time Charles Monteith threatened to remove them, the worst rivalries of Sue and Kate ceased.⁹ Kate wrote an abundance of letters in defense of Sue and Sue wrote for Kate. Although both Kate and Sue mourned leaving Kamiah, it was best that they had to leave. Of deeper significance than the McBeths' private jealousies were the ancient tribal frictions of which the sisters understood little. Even if they had, they could not have modified the long-standing enmities. The unhealthy psychology brewing in Kamiah was beyond the power of the McBeths to solve.

The indomitable Sue moved into what Kate called "her nice new home in Mt. Idaho," which was even more commodious than the mission one left behind in Kamiah. Promptly she began making ambitious plans. Still overflowing with ideas, she christened her school The New Carlisle, adopting the name of the famous Pennsylvania institution. But immediately after her move to Mt. Idaho, other problems arose to plague Sue. Because it was an entirely fresh venture in a young community of approximately one hundred and fifty inhabitants, on the edge of the vast unmapped mining wilderness beyond, there were no side benefits of housing or teaching equipment that were available at either Lapwai or Kamiah. This put an additional financial burden on Sue, whose "purse is very limited."¹⁰

Even though Sue protested numerous times that she is "weary of writing about [money]," much of her extant correspondence from Mt. Idaho deals with that worry.¹¹ A primary concern, and therefore a financial burden, was that of housing. She had bought her own house, but her pupils' houses at first had to be rented;¹² stoves must be purchased, and then there were the heavy heating bills; books were desperately needed, for teacher as well as for pupils.¹³ Because of the distance of Mt. Idaho from any central depot, the cost of all supplies to those "end of the Earth places" was more than Sue had calculated. She complained that

the freight was heavy from Lewiston, as well as the labor of such boxes has always fallen on the teacher of the Men's School [~~crossed out: Her sister would help nothing~~] even though so much of the contents used and the greatest part of the labor were for the wives and the little ones in the Woman's School.¹⁴

In spite of the fact that THE ST. LOUIS POST DISPATCH was reporting that

Miss Sue McBeth has been for years among the Nez Perce Indians as an envoy of the Washington Avenue Church¹⁵

there is no evidence available that the status of "an envoy" carried any official support from Missouri for Sue during these poverty-stricken years.

An additional expense which she had not anticipated was the necessity of a helper. Kate had served in this capacity for the last six years with mutual unhappiness, but now that Sue had removed herself from Kate's help, she sorely missed it. In asking for money Sue always included a plea for additional funds for a helper; she particularly wished to have Harry Hayes' help with the dictionary.

Since there was no money forthcoming from the officials of the board, Sue then undertook a voluminous correspondence seeking funds to erect little box houses for her students and their families. Here they could live in Mt. Idaho while school was in session. Through her new friend, Mr. L.P. Brown, she appealed to a territorial delegate, Mr. Harley, for a government appropriation toward this student housing. These small houses on tiny lots could be provided for about \$325 each, including "lining with muslin as these box houses must be done for papering, which keeps lizards out."¹⁶ That summer after Sue's move to Mt. Idaho saw the first issue of the IDAHO COUNTY FREE PRESS on June 18, with A.J. Parker as editor. During the first month of its existence Sue must have been pleased to read on July 16:

Miss McBeth's Indian School at Mt. Idaho has temporarily closed in order to give her pupils an opportunity to harvest their crops. The lady is doing excellent work.¹⁷

While Sue was struggling to become established in Mt. Idaho, Kate tearfully sorted the remaining possessions of her sister for Old Billy [Williams] to pack into Mt. Idaho. In her loneliness, Kate blamed herself, "why was I not more patient." As she listened to the preaching of Sue's pupils, Robert Parsons and Moses Monteith, Kate had to admit to herself that

Sue's work will go on even if not permitted to teach here.
A great work indeed it has been but narrow or rather
upon the few.

And then Kate would recall the last hard years, the arguments,
the stiff Scotch resistance to any moderation, and confide to her
JOURNAL,

such bitterness I fear is going to follow her [Sue] to the
grave.¹⁸

Preparing herself to leave Kamiah, Kate continued to look
upon her own move to Lapwai as an out and out calamity. She
had no regrets now about the separation from Sue after the
recent miserable years together, but she eyed Lapwai with
aversion, "that wicked place," that Sodom. Facing the ordeal of
living in Lapwai, Kate wrote:

For a time at first my heart nearly broke . . . the tears fell
fast as I thought I would be a kind of state prisoner and
that it would be so hard to see so often the man who has
hurt my heart so [Charles Monteith] . . . My last Sab. for a
time at least in dear K. [Kamiah] where I have shed so
many tears . . . I did not sleep but was able to appear
before the congregation tolerably . . . I was late &
notwithstanding all effort the tears came fast . . . Robert
announced my going & the first thought with the little
ones was no Christmas tree poor children yes they shall
have it.¹⁹

With rebellion in her heart and tears in her eyes, accompanied
by Robert Williams' sister and her husband, Kate left Kamiah in
the pouring rain. Rachel and Enoch Pond, "those dear tried
friends," had agreed to live in Lapwai with Kate. As their little
procession slogged and slipped its way out of the sodden valley
below, trickles of rain dripped from Kate's hat brim and rolled off
her nose with the bitter tears. The trip in early November was
cold. In the freezing rain now turning to snow on the high
prairie, they "tented out two nights on the wet ground & not sick
not even the tooth ache." Their safe arrival at Lapwai was almost
enough to convince Kate that perhaps her Lord did have work
for her to do in this unhappy place. But even her organ and her
home pictures could not make her feel right: "These mountains
are so different from the park-like surroundings of Kamiah, so

bare and Sinai-like."²⁰

For some weeks in Lapwai, Kate thought she was a social outcast. The new Mrs. Deffenbaugh did not even call upon her, nor did any other white woman. She observed:

Dr. Ellinwood thought I should be alone in Kamiah, alone among a people who cared for me, no no! Was at church at the Fort, walked. It was good to be there, although the people have not the good open faces the Kamians have or dress like them — blankets and short dresses here.²¹

Praying that she might "have wisdom & God given power to lead these poor women into long dresses & Christian ways," Kate made as many calls as she could to inform the Nez Perce women about her school. Even though she had come convinced that here "women do not want school," soon a small group began to gather:

Began school yesterday [Nov. 18], fearing I would not have one, but the Lord sent me three: Martha [Whitman], first, then Captain Kane's granddaughter and Mrs. Titus. Today Edward's wife and daughter. The knitting pleases them. I think the Lord is making a path for me here. Some more are to come. If God, my God abides with me and work is given me to do that will be society enough. The people all meet me so kindly; poor Sue sitting at Mt. Idaho, without any school. Why does the Lord permit all this: the prying, pruning and buzzing still goes on. Let sorrow do its work.²²

During November, Kate wrote to Mr. Rankin begging for money at once to pay the Indians who had secured firewood for the winter ahead. Six years before when she had arrived in Kamiah similarly unprepared, she had half frozen all through the long damp months. Now she had learned how to cope with such emergencies in a missionary's life. Unlike Sue, Kate was not a prolific easy letter writer. She felt she could "not write good little letters and never want to see what I have written afterwards."²³ But there was a letter she must write, one she had dreaded for months. She had several attempts before she mailed to Dr. Ellinwood:

Dear Friend

I began a letter to you when in my beloved Kamiah — perhaps best it should end in smoke for the burden of it was the disappointment felt in not seeing you in my own home. long & late did I listen for the chariot wheels & that too at a time when the distance was increasing between us. little did good Elder Billy [Williams] or I think as we watched the Miller [Crea] & Messenger sent for him pass out the gate that the reported Inspector was our Earthly Guide in Spiritual things. Billy I know would have put his white cotton gloves in his pocket (always worn on state occasions), mounted his pony and followed & I should have found some way to have met you at Lapwai or at Leiwston — not that I had or have any personal defense to make — the charges of working for a new Agent if inspected would be found as groundless as the charge against Mr. Deffenbaugh was two years ago of working among the people against the present one. I have no idea where the shadow of a foundation lies — unless it be in an occasional correspondence with three of the former instructors of Forest Grove or Salem Training School Sup't. & two teachers who left this Agency with bitter remembrances of their wrongs [Mr. and Mrs. Campbell?]; the notes which passed between us were purely business ones relating to the K. [Kamiah] children in their care. I did most of the writing for the parents from Kamiah. I know that Mr. McConville (one of the teachers) wanted to return to K . . . although neither he nor his wife are professed Christians, but did not know until told by the Miller that he [Mr. McConville] wanted to be Agent. He would not need any one to write for him among the Nez Perces . . . If this does not explain the charge I think of no other . . .

But I certainly would have tried a defense of my misrepresented Sister & her gentlemanly Christian pupils, who have asked in surprise "Will we not be asked what our teachings have been? or the teachings of our Teacher?" it seems so *strange* that the testimony of those

who have no fear of God or love for Indians in their hearts should have such weight. 'Will not the Judge of all the earth do right?' is a question not of doubt but of confidence — ah! yes but in His own time and way . . .

I have never for a moment thought I could be sent away . . .

Perhaps . . . now since my little S. [school] has been started here . . . will know better in spring what the Lord intends me to do — or do with us — leave us in the hands of a shrewd politician or show us our extremity is the Lord's opportunity . . .

Kate²⁴

Kate was all set to be lonesome, and lonesome she was, both on Thanksgiving and on Christmas Day, the two banner days of all the year since her childhood in Ohio. That first Thanksgiving in Lapwai (1885) was solitary and lonely.

. . . so perfectly alone, as far as whites are concerned if I was disreputable I could not be more isolated . . . Mrs. D. [Deffenbaugh] not yet in my house . . . heart has been in the little church at Kamiah & the little cottage home [Ohio]. poor Sue on Mt. I. is I know lonely for her children. It seems strange after so many years of usefulness all this darkness should come over her, but it can be traced to her own enmity to the Lawyers . . . had a good dinner all to myself. wished the Lord would send some old Indian woman to eat with me but He did not. Mrs. Edwards & daughter were led yesterday into the intricacies of turning heels. tomorrow it is yeast.²⁵

Christmas in Lapwai in 1885 was marked by low spirits for Kate, but it brought a ray of hope and a few friends. Kate's innate optimism and her unfaltering trust in her God did not allow her deep depression for long.

It blew so hard all night I could not sleep & my wandering mind was every where home troubled. . . Kamiah, knew Methodist like they were in the little Church singing & bearing witness until 12 o'clock. fifty-three Christmasses. How patient the Lord has been since the stockings were hung from the nails of the high

mantel in the old home . . . got my Christmas presents from the Lord store & many things Edward [Reboin?] brought out all from Him. I felt I had not been trying to make others happy. how little of that I have done. this morning early Rachel came for her red yarn for Enochs mittens so I got a good dinner & we had a pleasant day. talked much of Kamiah friends. Amy Annie & their friend came. how the Edwards improving. how much there is to encourage me. Almost ready to say right was the pathway leading to this hour. 12 pupils now. poor Sue — how many has she in Mt. Idaho. how changed — she used to have so many calls in the little Kamiah home . . . raining, thunder, & lightning this evening strange.²⁶

Kate need not have wasted any sympathy on "poor Sue" who that first Christmas in Mt. Idaho was spending it with a new "dear friend . . . Mrs. Scott, a cousin of Charlie Monteith." In answer to Kate's account of her lonesome Thanksgiving dinner when she had hoped in vain "for some old Indian woman to eat with me," Sue replied in true sisterly venom that she had two dinners given to her on that day."²⁷

Both Kate and Sue would have been comforted at the conclusion of this most difficult year, a year "of weeping humiliation," had they known that the Presbyterian Church claimed that

in 1885 the Nez Perce Presbyterian Church was the largest in the Pacific Northwest . . . due mainly to the devoted lives and capable service of the McBeth sisters.²⁸

While Kate was making her place in the Lapwai Valley through her "dear women," Sue on the edge of the high cold Camas Prairie found the women pupils her "greatest burden." During their years in Kamiah together, Sue had constantly complained about Kate's "School for Women," but now that she was alone with both men and women she was acutely aware of her sister's absence. The first winter in Mt. Idaho was not too severe, and the six families with their eight "little ones" living in three double houses with one room apiece were comparatively comfortable. At least they were better than in tents. Sue wrote in February to Dr. Ellinwood that "this winter's experiment has been a success."

The Mt. Idaho honeymoon was still excitingly new and fresh, and even with the unplanned-for expenses of rent and heating, the glamor of Sue's relished freedom from the agency cast a golden glow of ambitious anticipation over the New Carlisle.²⁹

Sue rejoiced that although scarletina was rampant in the neighborhood, none of her "little ones" had caught the contagion, a special worry since there was no agency doctor nearby. Any doctor's call would have put another additional financial drain on Sue.

At first Sue attempted to hold separate night classes for the wives, but neither eyes nor her strength was up to this extra burden. Before many months passed she was recalling her St. Louis experience when she found work among the women and children frustrating and exhausting. She then compromised that her boys teach their wives evenings after the babies have gone to sleep . . . Miss McB. has tried every other way first, but she has found that her "Boys" do it best for their wives . . . most women can now read in English 'more or less.'

Her first objective with the women was to inculcate cleanliness and then

to get the little ones out of the old rags into warm undergarments like white children's

Although Sue had never prided herself upon her own domesticity, she undertook to teach the women sewing. Almost immediately, she welcomed aid from Hattie Hayes [Mrs. Harry Hayes] as a "born needlewoman" who began helping the women with

their first dresses in calico with basque and overskirt like a white woman's. The simple dresses, they knew how to make, were too little removed from their native dress.³⁰

Ever since their separation, Kate had kept Sue fully informed about the condition of Tom Hill, who she reported was too sick from Policemans wound for the sherrif to take him to Mt. I. where will this end.³¹

All Tom Hill's defenders, "the returned hostiles" with Agent Monteith's backing, were incensed against the Christian Indians, concentrating their attack against the Christian Nez Perce leader, Robert Williams. Finally in December, the accused Tom

Hill was adjudged well enough to be taken to Mt. Idaho for trial, where the Idaho County Grand Jury indicted him for murder.³² Fanned by the wildest rumors feelings ran high throughout the reservation, among Indians and whites alike, particularly irresponsible elements in both groups.³³

By February Kate, conscious of her Christian responsibility toward all the women at Lapwai,

went to Jennie Slickpoos house . . . to see Mrs. Tom Hill
what an anxious face she has.³⁴

Soon the dread agency police were again dispatched from Lapwai to get Robert; Kate and Robert's sister, Rachel Pond, joined their worries and prayers over his safety. Since the Ponds' coming with Kate to Lapwai the fall before, as she had learned more intimately Rachel's basic attitudes, Kate had had serious misgivings about the young woman's Christian concepts. Kate had discovered that Rachel was "so much . . . like Robert," that she did not "like the idea of such a democratic S. [school]" and had not "felt comfortable from the first . . . and will soon go to Cottonwood." Kate was worried over Rachel's defense of a select few for she did not want Lapwai to become another Kamiah, "all trying to boss." Perhaps after all her careful teaching, Rachel too might "go back into squaw dress." But now when another threat endangered Robert, as the McBeths had previously, the two women, Kate and Rachel in Lapwai, solidly united in Robert's defense.³⁵

Not only did Robert face the ordeal of testifying at the coming murder trial but he himself was called again before the Indian court for "sins of the heart." The day of Robert's trial, March 3, Kate spent

looking over at the many coming & going & the blue
legged policemen . . . the anxious looking over to the
court house with my dinner waiting for hours . . . & then
coming and kneeling for strength . . . John Crea [the
miller] & Kentuck [Corbett] the witnesses against him . . .
poor Sue in Mt. I. has spent this day in prayer.

Kate's fervent prayers for Robert's exoneration, "that the counsels of Achithefel might turn to naught," but the end of the trial encouraged her to believe that "my pleading . . . had much . . . to do with the small fine of \$10.00" "With [Kate's] two little

lunches in his sack," Robert departed immediately to take the good news of his deliverance to "the little mother" waiting in Mt. Idaho.³⁶

Again back across the edge of the reservation, safe in the haven of Sue's New Carlisle Seminary, Robert remained in Mt. Idaho. Subpoenaed with him as a witness for Tom Hill's trial was another of Sue's "Boys," James Hayes, Robert's closest associate. Prohibited from leaving the territory, when Presbytery met the middle of April in Walla Walla, they were denied the great privilege of attending. Kate recorded in her JOURNAL:

Ministers here on their way to Presbytery & what a nice lot of gentlemen they are. they do not need the old clothes from boxes now. all have watches & how different they look from the rest. Sues work shows truly. William Wheeler & Jim H. [Hines] preached this morning . . . dear old Billy carrying report from K [Kamiah] church . . . because Robert & James H. was in Mt. I.³⁷

While the two men remained in Mt. Idaho continuing to study with Sue and waiting to be called as witnesses by the state, Sue was able through her influence with friends to arrange an opportunity for "her wise, unselfish helper":

Last Sabbath Robert preached by invitation in English in the Methodist church (or Stall) at Grangeville. Mr. Campbell, who was present, . . . a teacher for years at Kamiah and Lapwai . . . told me that he preached a good, gospel sermon and was listened to with the same respect as if he were a white minister and was felt even by the most careless to be a living proof of the power of the Gospel.³⁸

After the long months of waiting and delaying tactics of the agency forces defending Tom Hill, "responsible parties of good backing," according to A.F. Parker writing in the NEZ PERCE NEWS, were incensed that the defense secured a change of venue to the Lewiston court. In the middle of June, 1886, the case was tried . . . and a verdict of justifiable homicide was rendered. The acquittal of the criminal was a foregone conclusion. The officious interference of the U.S. government was designed for that purpose. An of-

official district attorney aided by an official representative of the local land office and a horde of official factotums, subordinates and witnesses, acting under implied instructions from Washington, strained every nerve to defeat the ends of justice . . . The expense to the county in transporting witnesses and the difficulties of conducting the prosecution were also enhanced . . . With such an array of official representatives the jury was easily overawed into returning the desired verdict . . . we therefore claim that the change of venue was an insult to the intelligence of the people of this county, conveying with it an implication of perjury to every citizen who is eligible for jury duty.³⁹

Through those first months at Lapwai, harried as she was by the distressing Tom Hill-Robert Williams' troubles, Kate had still other heartaches. Despite her immediate recognition that she would "not find companionship with the new Mrs. D" and her resolution not to let

it matter if Mrs. D. turns with dignity from me. I am not here for whites but to help lead into the light this poor people,

still Kate was hurt that the minister's wife did not call, did not come near her, the lone stranger. Kate noted a "great contrast between No. 1 & 2" and was certain that Number 2's "frizzed head . . . had never . . . had an idea of missionary work." Furthermore Kate was shocked that Mrs. D. did not attend church regularly:

in my three months here have not seen Mrs. D. but one day at church. what teaching.

But finally Kate gathered up her courage to have a little plain talk with Mrs. D. making it plain we must not again show before the people how little sympathy there is between us. I feared this would end all intercourse, but he [Mr. D.] was proud to bring her over on Thursday. I met her with a kiss & all seems to be over.⁴⁰

"Mrs. D." did appear at church for the first meeting in "the nice new church." It was much nearer "Parker's house" which Kate was to occupy "until the Dep. [Indian Affairs] is heard from about the Fort house"; Parker had left the bars on the windows,

"wooden ones." Although there was no formal dedicatory service ("how much they would have enjoyed the dedication"), three ministers, Mr. Deffenbaugh, Silas Whitman, and Enoch Pond all took part in the first service.⁴¹

Kate clung to every shred of encouragement possible; she rejoiced in her "nice school of 12 women . . . & two little ones" ... "so many more promising young married women & can reach through them to their husbands," and in the changed Edwards house which was

papered & furnished, everything cozy & comfortable & trees planted out — how much they love to be praised.

Edwards salary makes the difference.⁴²

In May there were two special events for Kate: that "red letter day" when two visitors, temperance speakers and workers, were her guests and she could "spread out . . . my silk quilt . . . my nice Steubenville presents" for their entertainment over night. One of the women, Mrs. Reese, "knew my friends so well . . . Oh what a treat after seven years from home." At the church services Archie preached and

stepped into the pulpit with his cane, some of the more humble ones would have done better.

Later even the stand-offish Mrs. D. came with her husband and "took tea with them here." The morning before the two women left found

the men in my S. room, the women on my kitchen floor & Mrs. Judge Buck in black satin seated among them.

Mrs. Reese asked how many used to drink. how many hands went up, even among the preachers . . . Jim Hines pronounced the benediction — of course Enoch [Pond] he special friend, was at the carriage with Mrs. R. [Reese] at the last.⁴³

It was "a great day . . . in Zion" a few weeks later when all eight of the Nez Perces ministers⁴⁴ were in Lapwai for the election of elders and "the laying on of hands in consecration." Although Robert still "so indifferent as to appearance," even as he had been in those days when he gave away his Presbytery coat to James Hayes, was "so full of . . . Grace" when Mr. D. "had him preach in the morning the first one asked." At the afternoon service although Joseph Lowrie, in Sue's opinion, "one of the

wickedest men on the Reservation."⁴⁵ had the most votes for elder, "just as I told Mr. D. . . . somehow that did not make any difference." Abraham Brooks and James Grant, a nephew of Chief Joseph, were ordained. Kate believed that her pupil, Mary, "Abraham's nice wife had much to do with his election." To the watching Kate with a prayerful lump in her throat, it was "truly an impressive sight while Mr. D. prayed" and all the Nez Perce ministers crowded around the kneeling candidates to put "eight hands on their heads." Stephen Reuben was made a deacon. Concluding the day Archie Lawyer and Peter Lindsley preached, "so stylish looking but — [Archie] nearly sent [Kate] out with head ache."⁴⁶

Even though the two sisters were separated by miles of wilderness, the bug-a-boo of conflicting authority and their differences still raised its head. Sue reported to Dr. Ellinwood that Felix Corbett reflecting upon his wife's desertion during last fall's camas season and anticipating the coming year, had appealed to her for help. Felix, disloyal to the traditional habits of the tribe, declared that "even a Chinaman will not eat it [camas]"; it was for this that his wife had deserted a year ago, leaving all responsibilities on him at home. When he had protested and tried to persuade her to remain at home where her wifely responsibility was to care for the gardens, she had retorted that

Miss Kate does not be displeased with or fault us for going to the Camus. It is only you.

Felix resorted to Sue's authority to restrain Kate's defense of his wife. But for once Sue refused, saying emphatically "No" that Felix must face Kate himself in order to work out his own domestic troubles.⁴⁷ Even though Sue considered herself the best-informed white person about the Nez Percés, after thirteen years she was just becoming aware of what another concluded after only three summers on the Reservation, that

where he [the Nez Perce man] goeth, she [his wife] will go — if she pleases — but no marital bond is strong enough to take her against her own will.⁴⁸

Just as Kate had her compensating rewards in her work with the Lapwai women, so did Sue with the men at Mt. Idaho. One of her joys was Mark Arthur for he was one of the few Nez Percés

who was not a grown, middle-aged man when she first knew him. Sue now considered him one of her brightest, most promising pupils in the Mt. Idaho school. She and Mark both believed that his life story was evidence of God's great care.

In the summer of 1877 he had been a little boy of seven or eight riding behind his "roving mother" on her pony over the Lo-lo trail. Kate records that

they were overtaken by some renegade Nez Perces hurrying home to get into the fight . . . on Kamas prairie . . . and found the Christians of the Kamiah Valley camped around their Church. A good place they thought for protection.

But the child and his mother soon found themselves in the midst of the "battle of the Big Hole" on the Clearwater and swept along with the fleeing Joseph Band. "None pursued or pursuing will forget that hardships of that journey." Some months later on that fateful morning at the Bear Paw Mountains, so near their goal in Canada, Mark had been sent out to round up the horses, when the white soldiers struck and surrounded the camp. The little boy was separated from his mother who was taken captive. Jumping on a pony, he fled with others to the

Cyprus Hills . . . [where] some friendly Sioux came gave them food . . . and then led them to Sitting Bulls camp.

Here seven tents of Nez Perces spent the starving winter; the young man

cannot forget they . . . had little else to eat but rabbits and they not abundant. he would have to rest many times when sent after the hobbled horses so weak was he.

In the spring of 1878, Mark accompanied a tent of Nez Perces who started out for the Flathead country. It was still extremely cold; the small group was weak, half starved, in rags. The streams, especially the Milk River, were full and swollen from the spring run-off, dangerous to ford. When her student told Sue of the hardships of this second journey, he recalled vividly that

a raft was made . . . by placing sticks between buffalo robes. the women and little ones placed on the raft which was hitched to horses . . . and pulled over.

Now no longer a protected child, but a hardened eight-year-old, he remembered how he had

pled for a place on the raft but was denied . . . had to grasp his ponys neck plunge in and swim his horse just as the men did crying as he went into the cold stream if my mother were here I would be on that raft too.

When the Nez Perces finally found the Flatheads, one of the women who was part Nez Perce took the little boy, now more dead than alive, into her tent. It was the following year with returning Nez Perces that Mark reached Kamiah again and there with other children found

a seat in the S.S. of the 1st Kamiah Church. This pleasant boyish face won our hearts

At Kate's first Christmas tree, the young Mark had been given a Bible and had been a McBeth pupil ever since, moving with Sue to Mount Idaho, a great comfort and help to her during that first hard year.⁴⁹

The first Fourth of July that Kate spent in Lapwai was literally a nightmare for her. Word had come that very day from Ohio that her beloved brother had been thrown from a buggy and broken both his arm and leg. Almost frantic from worry about this accident to the one closest to her not yet saved, Kate also faced great animosity from the heathen Nez Perces. They resented her opposition to their celebration of the Fourth, to their women riding with the naked celebrants of the day. Because Peter Kane's granddaughter had been the first enrolled in her Lapwai class, and because he had himself shown kindness by bringing Kate home from church in bad weather, she hoped that he would give her viewpoint a fair hearing. At first he was "very pleasant," but after talking to other Nez Perces and learning that Kate had been influencing Mr. Deffenbaugh, he

was on his horse riding round the camp denouncing me as he had done years before Robert . . . said I was troubling the people just as I did at K [Kamiah] . . . the men & women rode & seemed excited at sight of me.

When nighttime finally came, she "crept over to Mr. D's [Deffenbaugh's] at dark but slept none all night" with distorted dreams of her brother's broken bones and the howling "wild ones all around."⁵⁰

During August, Kate's worries were relieved by good news about her brother's injuries and by

Cap K very gracious indeed & after awhile not at once . . . how many look towards or from just as the wind blows. they feel this weakness themselves when they pray for manhood.

But new troubles moved in to replace the old ones:

30 of the Kamiahans are down with dysentery poor people . . . I remember of Peter [Lindsley] telling me about one summer . . . when so many died from this disease . . . they eat so many mellons.

Bad forest fires poured smoke over the valley which reminded Kate of Kamiah four years ago: "smoke smoke. so we can see but a short distance."⁵¹

Much to Kate's chagrin, Captain Kane's graciousness proved to be short-lived. From the early river boat days when he'd served as pilot, guide, interpreter, and go-between, he'd come to know the whites well. A veteran of the war of 1877, he had even manoeuvred to collect \$3 a day for sixty nights of watching over the hills of Lapwai.⁵² So now here he was back at Kate's door to take her measure, squinting at her with his sharp old eyes

to say my servant [Kits two tinnena] was making my raft on Sab. day . . . will Miss Kate receive wood made on Sab.

Lord give me wisdom.

The shock of this serious accusation was almost more than the shaken Kate could bear. Horrors of horrors, desecration of the Lord's Day! Of all the laws of Moses and the prophets, the McBeths had taught that the seventh commandment rated first and the second commandment next. And besides would

Mr. & Mrs. Solomon [Whitman] Martha & Silas [Whitman] hearts go from me . . . I felt the people here were caring for me as they used to in K. but how soon they can be stirred up."

Her heart feeling "as if Kits two tinnena's raft was standing on end on it [and] fearing it will come into my S.," Kate "tried to leave it all to Jesus." Then Kits two tinnena appeared swearing that "he never worked a minute on it on Sab" and threatened to take the matter to Titus, the police. Confusion piled on confusion when Cap K returned with Kits two tinnena's brother, "a red blanket and his hair in long plats but a good innocent face." While he occupied Kate's only rocking chair, Cap Kane

in his way explained that all the Kane camp one Sab went to church at North Fork, but his daughter & her Spokan husband & they said my servant had worked on Sab. but when he examined into it, it was Dick the Bears word & Kits two tinnena was cleared. so he sat talking when lo son Peter came by . . .

Cap. Kane's son Peter violently disputed his father's conclusion, insisting that seven of the Kane family had seen this crime committed on the Sabbath. With the trouble-making son two more "red blankets appeared, the enemys at close quarters." Now Kate, thoroughly terrified by "these shrewd twisty people," retreated "into the front room to tell Him . . . to restrain the blows."

By now it was apparent to even Kate that Cap. Kane did not want the matter to come before either the Church Court or the Indian Court. Kits two tinnena was not a church member, but even so Kate had "a warmy side for him for his mother's sake." Then inspiration dawned, or rather as Kate reported:

"Another Ebenezer must I raise . . . My God poured oil upon the troubled tides . . . I enquired which one of the rafts was the trouble about. the one here or the one at Akinaz? the one here. then I will take the other."⁵³

The final vindication of Kate's and Sue's work in their eyes was the removal of Charles Monteith from the agency during 1886. This man who had staked his career on their dismissal was ordered to leave. The investigations convinced the authorities in the Indian Bureau of D.C. that on the reservation the whites disliked him and the Indians distrusted him. Although he was a man of force, vigor, and forthrightness in announcing exactly his intentions, his judgments were visionary and his tactlessness cruel. With his departure the agency was thrown into new confusion. Within the next four years six different men held the office of Indian agent at Lapwai; within one twelve-month period five different agents came and left abruptly. Again in the McBeths' eyes their Presbyterian God had scored a complete triumph!⁵⁴

Almost exactly a year to the day after her arrival in Lapwai to [Kate's] surprise the Agent Mr. Morris brought a Mr. Tenson [?] of Baltimore to call upon me . . . he was the

inspector sent to see if we should stay on the Reservation. he found me anxious to be inspected — to anxious — & the charges were read — oh how humiliating to listen to. Oh Oh some of true . . . I was charged with just what Sue was charged with.

In reviewing her first year in Lapwai, Kate was able to summarize the experience by writing in her JOURNAL:

Here I am in the Parker house it has been a year of many blessings. Charly [Monteith] gone — all his plans & tricking thwarted. Man proposes but God disposes. Robert [Williams] is not silenced & I am still on the Reservation & the Inspector . . . said Sue can return when she wants to. there is nothing to hinder her . . . after all the sleepless nights this is all . . . the investigation put off & off until the new Administration & then the case dismissed.

Although, at times, as the second winter in Lapwai for Kate approached, she felt

last night was such a rainy dark one I did not like to look out in the Egyptian darkness for such a lonely feeling would come over me at remembrance that I might call & call & no one Mr. D. or Indians could hear me . . . away off alone . . . beyond human help . . . the great Govt. S. empty . . .

she and the new Mrs. Deffenbaugh were close enough friends now to spend Thanksgiving together with the "dear little two month old boy," James Robinson Deffenbaugh.⁵⁵

In the new church, the celebration of the semi-centennial of the Spaldings' arrival in Idaho was held for three days late in November. All of Kate's friends from Kamiah, Nez Perces from all over the reservation arrived for this occasion — everyone except Sue.

What grand, glorious meetings we have had . . . spent in tracing the hand of the Lord among the people . . . how pleased [they] were to be literally . . . to the front . . . The old people so anxious to tell of the coming of Mr. & Mrs. S. [Spalding] the Whitman Massacre was told about yesterday by Old Feathers who saw the deed . . . they gave the horrid details which I do not wish to repeat . . .

Archie splurging around . . . he must appear the leader.⁵⁶

Despite the exultation of the recent semi-centennial meetings, perhaps because of Kate's exhaustion from entertaining for it, when the second Christmas arrived in Lapwai it found her again lonesome on this "damp rainy day" for which she

had no heart to make popcorn . . . into balls . . . so gave the gifts for children on to Elders to give as they pleased.

James Reuben was on the church platform with the books, pictures, and toys spread all out at his feet, "toyes wrapped in papers." Kate had always heard much of Reubens' "dignified eloquence" and was pleasantly surprised "at his wit & ability to talk to little ones."

he told them why Christmas was observed, then about the Great Father at Washington, said here is your annuities now. waggons, plows, harness & all that. come now take what you need, watching they did not take plow & harness . . . James scrutinized the little boys, said, why you are not Indians. when I was a boy, I had no pants, skin sack, showing how it was fastened at nec. . . 'I never had pants on until that K [Kamiah] Sabbath S. began and then my first pair was made out of a flour sack with Idaho in large letters over [the seat] . . . everything he said was laughed at by his people who admire him so much.⁵⁷

As Kate had summarized her past year, so did Sue, snowed in at the inaccessible Mt. Idaho. With the more analytical mind, she recognized that even after the sisters' rapprochement, there would continue to be misunderstandings and hurt feelings between them. It was a blessing that the expression of conflicting emotions by letter or the rugged difficult journey from Lapwai to Mt. Idaho allowed a cooler and more level-headed weighing of differences. Sue longed for Kamiah and the reverent buzz of the Kamiah Church, over which her favorite Robert Williams still reigned.

Often as she drifted off to sleep, Sue idealized the past years in Kamiah. She need only close her eyes to see again the little white church . . . among the pines, with the near mountains for a background! No wonder that Solomon

[Whitman] . . . calls it the temple. Many of them come eight or ten miles — some sixteen . . . always at communion seasons Bartholomew [Moody] and his band come twenty miles. The people are there in time, too . . . for they love to sit in squads on the grass in summer . . . They used to sit in the snow, all the same, for then no woman entered until the bell rang.

Down the paths and the dirt road they came in companies, riding their pretty little ponies. The men . . . have bridles and saddles made by white men. The women . . . a bright red blanket, strapped over the home-made saddle . . . The mother is likely . . . to have a child before and another behind.

Sue remembered "the policeman in his uniform patrolling the grounds outside," strutting with the importance of his office. Since Christianity had eliminated the chiefs, this office held rank and prestige. Just inside the door

One of the elders stands — leaving his post . . . to perform the duty, not strictly speaking of usher, but packer, for after the seats are as full as full can be, then the floor is used.

From their special "reserved front seats" the McBeths would look over the packed room where Sue's "Boys" had arranged themselves according to their social position, the elders and honourable men at one side of the pulpit, or near the front.

Back near the door would be "the long hairs, and blankets, and wild eyes." Kate's women" and other honourable women" filled the middle block of pews. On the floor below them were "many of the poor . . . discarded wives." These extra unwanted women explained to the sisters the

little hand-shaking and sociability between the men and the women. Ministers and elders . . . look around upon old wives.

The stately Elder Solomon had once confessed to Sue that "he must have had one hundred" wives; even discounting his inability with figures, Sue was shocked. But best of all Sue could visualize her pupil, Robert Williams, entering the pulpit "with the air of a doctor of divinity." With no musical gifts herself, Sue

loved to recall the Nez Perces'

sweet voices . . . singing in a minor key.

Sometimes during their witness-bearing meetings, some old man or woman would rise up, and in thin, broken, tremulous tones, sing some very old hymn . . . sometimes . . . entirely alone. Again, two or three voices would join in from the different parts of the congregation . . .

And Sue would think to herself

I have never heard that before . . . [they are] plainly saying, 'But few of us are now left to sing the old, old songs of Zion, which Mr. Spalding taught us.'

Their final approval of the prayer with their drawn-out, soft "Aah" was the closing benediction in Sue's memory. Sometimes she was asleep before she saw clearly once more each face of her "Boys" as they solemnly arose and shook hands first with the pastor, each other, and then with their "little white mother."⁵⁸

But in the clear daylight of reality, Sue had to admit that there were compensations here in this far-away location. Most of all she reveled in a freedom in her teaching that she had never enjoyed in either Lapwai or Kamiah. At those two locations, she had to satisfy the demands of both the Indian Agency and the Presbyterian Board of Foreign Missions. Now at Mt. Idaho, Sue was completely away from any jurisdiction of the government and on the whole free from the board too, since the board knew only what she cared to tell them. Sue was only accountable to God, and she never questioned her ability to know His will. On the Camas Prairie she was no longer a lone white woman in an alien tribe as she had been those first years in Kamiah. Here in Mt. Idaho, she found congenial men and women of her own race; even that miserable Charlie Monteith's cousin, Wallace Scott, became such a trusted friend that in the next revision of her will, Sue listed him with Mr. L.P. Brown as her executors. And best of all, away off here on the edge of nowhere her boys and their families were really all hers alone. Thus well separated the two sisters could raise their individual Ebenezers.

CHAPTER 13

EGYPT AND ISRAEL

The winter of 1886-1887, in contrast to the previous one, was most severe. Heavy snows fell in all the region, especially on the higher elevations of the prairie where Sue was snowbound for months, some weeks without any mail at all from the outside. *The Idaho County Free Press* in the spring of 1887 was quoting the *Lewiston Teller's* estimate that there were 43 feet of snow on the Lolo Trail, and a proportionate amount had buried Mt. Idaho.¹ As usual Kate worried,

I cannot tell how deep the snow is here & what it must be on the mountains . . . been raining or snowing for nearly three months.²

Many of the Nez Perces were desperately short of provisions. Before the late summer drought had settled down on their farms, they had over estimated their 1886 harvest and packed far too much of their produce into the back mining country for high prices early in the season. The unprecedented severity of the long winter, combined with the ultimate crop failure of grains, brought suffering and great privation to the whole tribe. Many cattle starved and froze to death during repeated and severe blizzards. To maintain their own existence, many Nez Perces were reduced to eating into their seed corn for the coming spring planting.

Sue's little coterie of families, huddled in their Mt. Idaho one-roomed box houses, became even more of a financial load on her dwindling reserves. As a result of all the many unexpected pressures and unpredictable emergencies that had slowly revealed themselves in Mt. Idaho, Sue reached the extremity of her financial needs — which had been bad enough the year before. She wrote to Mr. Rankin in Philadelphia:

If the Board can help her [Sue] about the rent and stoves, or even the rent alone, if they can do no more,

she will be glad. She had not had one dollar of help for the New Carlisle save the printing press money.

Perhaps she spoke before of Miss Kate C. McB . . . her expenses are even less now than when at Kamiah; she is so much nearer the base of supplies at Lewiston. I think she would still be willing to give back the \$100 which she does not need — even for a 'rainy day' [~~crossed out: for which she has enough~~]. That \$100 would pay the rent of last year; or help to pay future rent . . .

Pinned to the bottom of the last page, still there for posterity to read:

I have often been tempted to ask Mr. Rankin to accept that \$100 of my sister's salary, if only for my sister's sake, alone. [~~crossed out: "Some things grow on us with the years.~~] The surplus salary was only a temptation to save — even in matters which might have advanced her pupils: For instance: her pupils were not allowed to take home their school books to study, even their bibles to save the wear of books. The same set of books were taken to Lapwai leaving S.L. McBeth to provide books for wives as well as husbands here. I write this *detached*, because it is *for Mr. Rankin's eyes alone*, or, if need be, *his and Dr. Lowries* — to both of whom S.L. McB has so often 'shown her heart.' She may not send this, but she feels better after writing it at least.³

How much wiser it would have been if Sue had not sent the note! If she had only accepted, like Kate, God's help in feeling better "after writing it" and destroyed the note. Certainly it did not make the men in charge back East "feel better"; it merely confirmed what Charlie Monteith had written two years before:

Their example as sisters has been anything but Christian, or becoming to sisters. Until within the last six months, they have tried to secure each other's recall . . . They have worked and talked against each other shamelessly. All of which is known to both whites and Indians, and is a disgrace to the cause they represent.⁴

While Sue was battling the ravages of blizzards and finances on the prairie, Kate in the Lapwai Valley was struggling with remorse,

Oh Lord forgive all my unkind thoughts . . . how sore my heart is now that I ever felt so hurt at [the] indifferent manner [of] . . . poor dying Mrs. D. [Deffenbaugh] . . . how she still clung to hope when she said Miss Kate pray for me. I want so to live for my boy. I can hear her tired sighs yet.

But two days later the young mother lay in her wedding dress & beautiful casket . . . Mr. Boyd & Silas [Whitman] conducted the services . . . Mr. D. carrying . . . the darling . . . 3 month old Bobby . . . [the casket] temporarily laid on the top of the little hill back of the Agent's house.⁵

It was Kate who wrote the "In Memoriam" for Mrs. Deffenbaugh in the *Presbyterian Banner*, February 10, 1887.

Other illnesses and deaths accompanied the long winter and floods; the children both in Kamiah and Lapwai became seriously ill. When children living in the government school died after only the briefest of illnesses, their frantic parents demanded that they be allowed to return home. The new agent, instead of allowing the children to leave, called out the "whole police" force.⁶

Oh so many are sick . . . After service began today a running man from the S. [school] entered. Gave Edward [Reboin?] a note he & his wife went out. Abraham announced another . . . dear little K [Kamiah] boy . . . was dead . . . Daniels & Henrys boys were burried together only on Thursday if these poor fathers reached home what sorrowful hearts in K. today. Strange that two such little boys should die of Apolpoley. poor children sleeping on the floor with two blankets & no fire. God help poor Indians everywhere . . . Young Noah's little boy is dying; to my surprise Noah came at dark to see me & when I asked if he wanted anything said no but his heart was so sick he came for comfort or medicine his eyes were swollen from weeping.

two tents of Kamiahians . . . came through all this fearful way for their children. poor poor people . . . Amelia Budell dear little Joel lies a corpse today & will not be burried tomorrow waiting for the bought coffin to be

brought from Lewiston (the first Indian that I ever knew to be burried in anything but the homemade box.

Some terrified children, with sore throats and wracking coughs, escaped from the school buildings, fled away into the hills to hide; they reminded Kate of her girlhood experiences seeing

negroes fleeing in time of slavery [from] the blue panted police riding past in the rain . . . searching up the two creeks . . . for the poor little children.

two ran off friday night & 11 Sab. night⁷

An inspector arrived at the fort "to prevent an out-break," and "the fifth K. [Kamiah] boy died while he was here." The frenzied Nez Perce fathers and mothers wired Washington, D.C. and enlisted again the help of James Reuben, who had been influential in the release of the Oklahoma captives. "Poor Robert" [Williams] because he "had wanted Charley away" was now blamed for this newest calamity of the childrens' deaths, "& this [new] Agent has killed their children."⁸

When the long, formidable, and sad winter finally dragged out toward spring, a chinook threatened. Kate was terrified with the creek still running as it has been in close to my house — making such a noise.

Her fears were augmented by loneliness and heartache for that "lovely Christian character," Mr. Deffenbaugh, who left in late March

with his gentle manner . . . helped with the sodering & packing [of his wife's] coffin . . . after lying . . . three months upon the hill . . . but when he saw the coffin and trunks all in the waggon he flew into the house to find a place to weep.

Again Kate found herself all

alone to the human eye — beyond call of any of the people . . . away off beyond human help . . . here alone 18 or 20 empty houses. Old Agency buildings.

Living in the valley on the brink of Lapwai Creek, Kate packed her belongings for evacuation should a flood descend, because

all told me my house would likely go as the mill [Henry Spalding's] did 8 years ago . . . two nights I rose and

dressed myself . . . a rainy day & the water up near my house & not a white friend to stay all night with . . .

But again Kate knew that

The Master of the winds has sent the rushing waters . . . in the night . . . first one way and then another & opened up the ground to receive the snow water . . . morning showed me I might just as well have been sleeping . . . this evening I praise his name. bare spots are to be seen & the famishing ponies are picking on the mountain sides.⁹

Even though Kate was supposed to devote herself exclusively to the women's welfare, little by little she became more involved with the men. She began working with James Reuben, Joseph Lowrie, and George M. [Moses], translating hymns into Nez Perce; "Oh how they do love to sing."

Kate's involvement with church politics and the Nez Perce men increased even more when Mr. Deffenbaugh returned after a month's absence on his second sad journey East. Her worst apprehensions were confirmed when he announced that he "will not remain here long" and that the Spalding church "must choose a minister." Archie Lawyer obviously aspired to be installed there and his friends were zealously forwarding his ambitions. Kate feared in Lapwai the same forces that had burdened Sue in Kamiah.¹⁰

Although Mr. Deffenbaugh had said he would go to Presbytery alone this time to make arrangements about leaving Lapwai, four of the Nez Perce ministers "used their own minds," Robert Williams, James Hayes, Moses Monteith, and Robert Parsons, to go on their own initiative: "he will be astonished to meet them . . . what a surprise."¹¹ Upon their return Mr. Deffenbaugh announced that Presbytery had granted the Nez Perces' request to call one of their own ministers, but he also spoke of the one who had kept money entrusted to him & if they believed or knew this to be so it would not be best to have him Archie, the very one they have planned for & knew all this truly nothing can be hid . . . Mr. D. said only christians to vote. what a blow.¹²

When the vote was counted, Peter Lindsley had "a hundred votes Archie 57," but Peter refused the call, and Mr. Deffenbaugh was persuaded to remain one more year.¹³ Late in

May, Presbytery met in Lapwai¹⁴ and Kate's house was full and overflowing with her Kamiah friends and many

fine white [women] made the people look darker ... how comical the women all looked with high hats and bustles as odd as the handkerchiefs & shawls look to the whites.¹⁵

While Kate planned farewell gifts and helped prepare the Indian women to accompany their missionary husbands leaving for "heathen bands," Sue was frantically appealing to the Philadelphia Office for financial support. She was indignant that Archie Lawyer with the Crows had received \$600 ("I do not know why") when James Hayes with the Umatillas his first year "had suffered on only \$250." Then there are those extra costs of hospitality which Easterners cannot understand, but an

Indian minister has only one room & he cannot eat without asking the others, hungry standing around watching.

As the Reverend Enoch Pond had told her, "All wild creatures are tamed by food."¹⁶

As a parting token of esteem, James Hayes received from Kate THE PILGRIMS' PROGRESS, when he left for the Umatillas, but his wife, "Fanny does not look too happy about their going." In contrast, Enoch Pond was "so happy that [he was] wanted again to the astonishment of Mr. D."; the Ponds were given

a beautiful picture book ... [which] will help them to talk to [the Spokans]¹⁷

The water was still flowing dangerously high when Kate watched her beloved Rachel cross "the fearful river" [Clearwater] with her husband, four pack horses and a canoe. Happy to be returning to their former location, the Ponds were crushed to discover that during their brief absence a white man had usurped their house, claiming to have bought it. Mrs. Campbell came to their rescue taking in the homeless minister and his wife, and Mr. Deffenbaugh, had to leave to straighten out the difficulty, since neither the agent nor any government official "would risk their lives on the river . . . crossing and recrossing." Rachel had to leave "her beautiful spotted pony" behind when she went with Enoch to the Lewiston court to settle the dispute with "hearts filled with bitterness that they were not defended by the One who is sent to care for such" [the Agent].¹⁸

Since the return of the "heathen Joseph" band from Oklahoma two years before, many new problems had been building up for the agent, the Presbyterian Nez Perces, and for the minister and missionaries. The new agent, Mr. Norris, had first approached Mr. Deffenbaugh with the suggestion that possibly he

could sanction horse racing on the coming 4th July! Was ever such a proposition made since Faroh told Moses Just to worship God in the Land.¹⁹

The gentle tactful Mr. Deffenbaugh "so smoothed down" the idea that "the force was lost" of his disapproval. While he was absent across the river involved with the Ponds' housing difficulties, agent Norris used his official pressure on the Nez Perce Stated Supply, Silas Whitman. The minister and his elders agreed to unite the tribe on this special day, to move the Christian people to the grounds at the fort camping with the heathen, "close to the old race ground." Thus the mountain came to Mohammed! Practically on the race track in the midst of pagan festivities, the Christians were to hold religious services each day and communion on the Sabbath. Had the Christians remained near the church, where they had been wont to hold their campmeetings, there was no room for a race track.

When Mr. Deffenbaugh returned to the accomplished fact, he found himself the pivot of an exploding conflict over the Fourth celebration. Kate sought to dissuade him:

"You cannot have a part in this heathen celebration which makes a mockery of Christ's church and which points back to heathenism."

"But," pleaded the Reverend Deffenbaugh, "how can I, a minister of the Gospel, refuse to go to our Nez Perces to conduct the sacraments?"

"Never, never should you appear in that mixed-up heathenish crowd. I would myself never think of it under any circumstances; certainly not for a religious service."

"Whatever you say, Miss Kate, I have given my assent. No matter how I respect your opinion, I must conduct those services. Who knows but even one lost soul may be saved for our Lord's Kingdom? Would not that alone be worth any personal sacrifice?"

"Oh, no, Mr. Deffenbaugh, you still don't understand. You can't know these heathen as my sister and I do, these returned non-treaties. You make my heavy heart weep over the poor spiritually slain ones, those of our saved Nez Perces who will backslide into sin. That Lawyer band with their guileful cleverness! You are taking Israel over into the very camp of Egypt!"

But the young Mr. Deffenbaugh could be stubborn too; much against Kate's admonitions, he went over to the united camp "to assist in the sacrament." Kate's personally enforced boycott of the Fourth celebration was a special cross for her to bear, because basically she loved being with others and found it most difficult to isolate herself or to remain aloof from happy gatherings. But this was different; even the pagan Joseph was there! Kate was utterly alone in "a silence which can be felt" with only

the cattle resting at noon in the cotton woods around my house . . . to bear witness that the Lord's worship and horse racing should not be mixed up . . .

while at the camp over

at the Garrison perhaps a thousand there . . . every N. P. man, woman & child is on the camp-race ground & to think all those poor weak followers are there by command of the Elders . . . I hope none . . . will get whiskey."

In the resulting confusion of Christian-pagan rites, some of the most consecrated Nez Perce Christians hardly knew what standards the church upheld. Of the 1887 Fourth Kate wrote:

Monday . . . was the Fourth, and such a Fourth they had not had since their heathenism. The agent rode at the head of the procession, which was spectacular enough to please him, and the more than two hundred whites from Lewiston and region round about, who stood watching the display from the verandas of the fort buildings, enjoying the sight, even to the naked men who helped to make up the procession.

"The Fourth over, the races began. Delightful situated! So thought the racers—and many in camp, for the Christians could sit in their tent doors and see all that was

going on—just the creek between. Some of the more thoughtful Christians saw the danger to Christianity. Poor old Elder Paul [Corbett] came to me and said 'I now see the door is open back to heathenism.'²⁰

In contrast to the alarm felt by the missionaries and by the Christian Nez Perces, one of the "two hundred whites from Lewiston" signing only his initials, J. B. R., gave his impressions of the same day writing in the LEWISTON TELLER:

On Monday last, the 4th of July, I had the pleasure of seeing a sight I never saw before and certainly never expect to see again . . . At about 5 o'clock in the morning several of my friends and myself left Lewiston . . . the country between Lewiston and Lapwai is certainly a beautiful sight, broad fields of grain stretching away as far as the eye can see . . . We arrived at our destination about 8 o'clock . . . having a couple of hours to spare we spread a bountiful lunch . . . an appetite which an early morning ride generally brings, got away with it. We then drove up Lapwai creek . . . where about 600 Indians were congregated . . . The ceremonies were opened by agent Norris, who made a very appropriate speech . . . The next thing on the programme was the war drill . . . in the distance up the creek, we could hear yells that caused the lady members of our party to express their opinion as to . . . going home. In a few moments the crowd of horsemen approached . . . and this is the way they appeared to me: the leader [Joseph] or chief, was dressed in undress uniform, in fact about all he had on a head dress of feathers and a piece of cloth about his loins; his body was decorated in the most hideous manner with different colored paints; the rest of the band were attired in a similar manner, the only difference being in the color of the paint which they used; the horses they rode, many of them very beautiful animals, were also covered with paint. The Indians were fully armed, some with spears others with rifles, pistols, bow and arrows, tomahawks, clubs, etc. During the drill they kept up a most horrible yelling, then they would stop and begin their war song, which sounded like a

dirge. Take them altogether, they were a diabolical crowd. We were informed by several of the old members of the tribe that it was a very correct representation . . . as they prepare to go on the war path . . . we turned our horses toward home fully satisfied . . . that we had seen a sight that we would never forget.²

And this spectacle was just ten years after the Joseph War; many of the participants had taken part in both events! No wonder the ladies were nervous. Truly during these troublesome years "the door was open back to heathenism." Every facet of popular opinion was arrayed to encourage these "Wild Fourth's." The orderly, reverent, good neighborly old-time Kamian commemorations were largely ignored and forgotten in Lapwai, the agency center. In contrast, the protesting voices of the "little missionary," the few ministers, the handful of faithful Nez Perce Presbyterian elders, sounded feeble and carping. Aligned against them were the official prestige of the Indian Agent with his governmental control; the returned non-treaties, some of whom were now frankly pagan again; the fast-growing group of influential white settlers like JBR of Lewiston, who with no malignancy, only thoughtless curiosity and ignorance, enjoyed the Nez Perce Fourth as a day's spectacular amusement of vicarious thrills.

Agent Norris reported to the Secretary of the Interior that the 1887 Fourth of July was "carried out in an orderly and highly satisfactory manner" by some six hundred Nez Percés. After noting the transfer of Mr. Deffenbaugh, he continued:

Miss Kate C. McBeth is now the only Protestant missionary upon the reserve . . .

He insisted that "harmonious relations with subordinates (employees)" must be maintained because

Employees will be of little service to the Government or to the Indians, by whomsoever appointed, until they are made subject to the agent, who is held to the strictest responsibility for their acts. Insubordination must be discouraged.²²

With absolutely no intention of ever becoming "subject to the Agent," the McBeths maintained their steady perseverance, somewhat comforted to hear that in the safe haven of Kamiah

the Christian Fourth still prevailed. There some "260 Kamiahans . . . dressed in citizens' clothes" marched with banners to the grove near the Church, where Robert Williams read the Declaration of Independence and made an address. Other speeches followed, then the big dinner under the pines, and finally the singing of their treasured old gospel hymns. Before the Christian Nez Perces broke up to return to their peaceful and civilized homes, they held evening prayers as the sun slipped behind the shadowed hills.²³

Even though Sue on the high Camas Prairie escaped both the threat of spring floods and the worst of the Fourth celebrations, she had her own private struggles. Since her first knowledge of the Nez Perces, now some fourteen years ago, when she learned (or at least believed she learned) that "there is no original word for 'home,' 'family,' or 'husband' in the N. P. language—only tent or lodging place which is common to the whole tribe," Sue had been convinced that "white civilized" concepts must be inculcated in her "Boys" and their wives. Her purpose at Mt. Idaho was to help her "Boys'" wives become "help mates not draw backs" in their projected ministries. To both the men and the women she urged constantly that

I want you to live (as to your homes) like white men . . .
Her plan is to plant such Christian and civilized 'homes' among the wild tribes as models and 'spurs' to help in supplanting the tents and usages of barbarism with a Christian civilization. Hence the 'homes' and 'family' training at Mt. Idaho.²⁴

Sue was horrified with the Nez Perce "band" philosophy that held priority over such sacred Christian doctrines of the personal possession of "husband," "home," and "family." It was only the "most wild Indians" that held "all things in common." Even moving to Mt. Idaho, Sue had not escaped this same basic conflict of personal ownership and rights versus the general tribal ownership and control. This was the same dilemma that the U. S. Government, civil and military authorities alike, had faced and would continue to battle in the approaching allotment plan.

All these sundry and diversified activities kept the "hands of S. L. McBeth" filled to overflowing with duties and cares of the New

Carlisle:

everything needs to pass through her hands . . . she is in a whirl [with] school, pupils' families, lately come missionary boxes . . . the tax on time & strength of 'wife' and 'mother' training even of 6 families, besides that of sickness of little ones with incompetent nurses, births, deaths, and the teacher having beside to attend to all 'business matters' pertaining to such a school.

Miss McB. is so wearied and almost ready to give up the long lonely struggle with heathenism (of the weight of the white friends with the opposing forces is so heavy)—she looks down to the little brave band at Kamiah 'holding the Fort still.'²⁵

Starting her third year in Mt. Idaho, Sue had "no valor of ignorance . . . no charm of the unknown . . . it lay all bare and bald."²⁶ She had become adjusted, if not silently, to the everpresent financial stringencies and had been able to shift the chief responsibilities of the women and little ones to their husbands. Now she realized that her self-imposed isolation worked both ways. Not only was she spared the interference and annoyance of the agency, but she was also cut off almost completely from communication with the outside world. This was particularly true of the board in Philadelphia. It may be surmised from the evidence of silence that after the McBeths' involvement with the Nez Perces' difficulties of 1885, after Dr. Ellinwood's investigation and his damning subsequent report added to Charles Monteith's accusations, after Sue's sudden unauthorized move to Mt. Idaho, that the officials of the board determined that Sue be allowed to be entirely independent. That they kept their correspondence to the very minimum was a great trial to Sue, who loved to write voluminous letters and to receive long replies. After Sue's announcement of her move, already accomplished in August, 1885, she had very few communications. For the first few months undaunted, she blamed the irregular mails for the silence, and continued to write regularly, even more fully than she had been accustomed to in Kamiah. Gradually it dawned on her that the silence was not accidental. She repeatedly mentions the dearth of letters

the long silence . . . is so lonely with no letters or replies.

shall she not have a few lines, at least, in answer to this if it will not tax Mr. Rankin too much.²⁷

Sue played all the chords for sympathy: "if she dies soon"—this six years before her death; her great endeavors and privations. July, 1887, there was a curt refusal of her plea for money to pay Harry Hayes, her helper, "who needs money very badly." Just before Christmas, 1887, Sue's desperation was lessened with the welcome news that the Women's Foreign Missionary Society of northern New York had pledged \$200 for Harry Hayes. In gratitude she passes on a little story which Harry Hayes told her . . . His brother Alex (a rover) . . . has just returned from the Lemhis. A minister was trying to explain to a Shoshone Chief "the two worlds after this life."

'Is the white man there?' asked the Chief.

'Yes.'

'Huh' was the answer. There is no place there for me, then. If it is a good world, as you say, the white man would soon come along, and, if he saw I had a good place, he would want it himself. He wouldn't let me stay there; but would drive me out again, and take it himself.²⁸

During the fall, Kate was gratified with the continuing growth of the new Sabbath School and decided it was her special work, because her "poor little dwindle school [was] so depressed." Her regular school work had not "started right yet" and Kate could not "see where it is to come from . . . will I try to take men will I have a sewing S. or what."²⁹

Besides her worry over the lack of a proper school, Kate faced other troubles. Earlier in the year during Sabbath School Enoch Pond and Joseph Lowrie had

brought up the Tawat sub. in Jim M. [Moses] house . . . it looks as if there was as much heathenism as fifty years ago . . . great circles of women.

Now Jim Moses was "again at me . . . thinks I am against Archie . . . Abraham [Brooks] rose for my defense."³⁰

Visitors arrived unannounced in Lapwai, the Crows who appeared on

the same evening Archie and Amy were married—not six months since Failie [illegible?] died . . . [his] late wife's

funeral services were held at Lapwai in a darkened church with lamps lit at mid day . . . ³¹

a sure indication of Archie's heathenish tendencies! This mixture of heathenism and Christianity was an increasing sorrow to both the McBeths. Sue had plead repeatedly,

Please keep Archie away from Kamiah! [for he has already] ruined Silas Whitman.

Archie represented to the Crows that he was a mighty chief—inherited from his father—and that Silas was his sub-chief. Last summer after staying with the Crows, Archie and Silas returned to the "Sabbath School Picnic at Kamiah" with pictures of Sitting Bull in all his chieftain's glory. These they showed to the Nez Perces with "laudatory comment" which recreated for them

the old days when with their friends the Crows [the Nez Perces] just stole for the fun of it—it was Heavenly!³²

Archie was positively dangerous and now here he had instigated a return visit of the Crows to the Nez Perces at the Lapwai Agency:

The Crows have come . . . following Archie six hatless men bright blankets leggins & braided hair. I fear they will not hear much about the true God . . . speak by signs . . . platted, feathered beaded & blanketed . . . painted inside of the ears & many plats hanging down their backs not their own hair but from the skulls of the enemys & the Nez Perces used to be like them . . . spoke through Tom Hill . . . of course Jim [Moses] had to make a speech & the Agent . . .

With the Crows still in Lapwai, the tactful Mr. Deffenbaugh asked Archie to assist at communion. Although Archie was impressively solemn, Kate found it

so hard to see one so unworthy lead in service—Elders Paul [Corbett] and Abraham [Brooks] not here, both tired hearts.³³

Added to Archie's other sins, there was the Alder Creek Church. Sue blamed him for persuading "the weak-backed Abraham" in this undertaking, for which there was absolutely not "the least need." Even the "gentle Mr. Deffenbaugh" was criticized, "May God forgive Mr. Deffenbaugh for the Alder Creek organization," but Sue was in no forgiving mood herself.

She classified James Grant, nephew of Chief Joseph, the new Lapwai elder, as another "amiable but weak-backed pupil," now living in the old Spalding house, using part of it as a stable. She bewailed the fact that there is "no discipline of church members," even though she herself has had great forbearance.³⁴

To the McBeths, it had often seemed that almost all of the Nez Perce sins had involved sooner or later their horses, especially their treasured Appaloosa. Now it was not only horses but also their other scourge, the evil white men. The Indians were infuriated that their colts were frequently killed by the mules imported to pack into the mining back-country. The Nez Percés were helpless to prevent this invasion by the unwelcome marauders, but they could

tie cans full of rocks to the mules' tails. It wouldn't stop them from killing the colts but it'd sure let the white men know the Indians didn't want mules in this part of the country if they'd keep on killing. This must have happened around '86 or '87.³⁵

The holiday season was joyless for Kate, because after telling Bible stories for about a month every Friday evening to the government school children, the privilege was suddenly and arbitrarily denied her. Even on Christmas itself because "Archie [was] preaching—so there would be no profit to me if there," she remained at home with the excuse of a severe cold. Shortly, her newly made friends, "the dear Eaves family," recently appointed as government teachers, were in trouble with the agent. The whole white community at Lapwai again exploded into recriminations, threatened dismissals, accusations, reinstatements, and lengthy investigations:

almost daily collision with Agent . . . [the Eaves] were ordered to take charge of the Fort S. boys . . . [but] Silcot Chief of police ordered them out . . . the Eaves, Williams, & Harmons all the Employees in this building here & the boys with out any one . . . Oh! Oh! Mr. E. pointed to the guns behind the door. May God cool his hasty southern temper down.³⁶

Kate's Lapwai New Year's did not have the parade of Kamiah custom but only the ominous
riding round all night singing, I'm Going Home, I'm

Going Home ... [and] feast at Jim Moses
Archie still assisted at communion and
Jonah was reinstated in the Eldership after years of
silence. hope he is too old to care for women now ...
seems to look with admiration up to Archie.

Kate had known of Jonah since those days in Kamiah when she was still unable to understand Nez Perce and could only watch him trying to trap Sue with his shrewd questioning when he was chief of police.³⁷

Ever since Kate's arrival on the reservation, she had been bothered over forbidding her school to the women who ignored the crucial Seventh Commandment, which was foreign to all the traditions, old customs, and bringing up of the Nez Percés. In Lapwai she had "only eight pupils." Living together as most of them still continued to do in the long communal house, a strict marital code was impossible. Kate alluded to this trouble when she wrote that although her Indian women had a great zeal to learn, she was concerned over those who for moral reasons were denied school. Sue had noted that when an Indian man learned that the church allowed only one wife, he did "just what his white brother would do," turned away his older wives and retained the youngest and most attractive. Kate repeated Spalding's story of the old chieftain with two wives who retorted to the missionary,

All right, but you tell wife number two!

Kate had also concluded that the women were not wholly innocent; she reluctantly had to admit that the women seemed to enjoy playing the game among themselves of "husband stealing."³⁸

She was plunged into such a dilemma by none other than Martha Whitman, who had had such a tempestuous wedding but had grown into

a good missionary wife, one of the most attractive young women of the tribe ... [even though she] had given us much anxiety in Kamiah.

Martha had been completely convinced by Kate of the rightness of the Seventh Commandment, so much so that she took matters into her own hands. While her husband, Silas, was assisting Mr. Deffenbaugh in Lapwai,

One Saturday morning early she appeared in my kitchen ... with trembling lip to show me her troubled heart. She began by saying yesterday I went up the creek I had a good heart when I started but when I entered the house and found my niece there as the second wife of that man (his lawful wife there also) I flew at her and gave her a good whopping. I was so angry. She is sick in bed now. I don't care what is done to me but will they silence my husband?

Kate was comforted by "her righteous indignation" and advised her to go immediately to the church where the session was meeting "and tell the whole story."

She did. Mr. Deffenbaugh came over afterwards to tell me the results. He pled for her saying that she, the aunt, stood in the place of a mother ... & that a white mother would get just as angry ... from the same cause & might do just as she had done give her a whipping ... If the matter had been laid before the tribe at that time the most of them would have said the Aunt's sin of getting angry is far worse than the sin of the girl.³⁹

Neither Sue nor Kate ever suggested any better solution than the Nez Perces devised for these "discarded wives" who during the summer pitch their tent somewhere & cultivate a piece of ground, but when winter comes, she with her provisions for the season is again kindly received & sheltered in the little house of her former husband, Ezra like ...⁴⁰

By summer Mr. Deffenbaugh definitely had been released from Lapwai: "what a beautiful Illustration of the Christian gentleman ... for 10 years," so wrote Kate in her JOURNAL. Kate had never known Idaho without him. At first he was only a young, inexperienced bachelor, feeling his way in an alien place. But he had learned his lessons well, many of them from the McBeth women, had developed good judgment, except in the McBeths' opinion about the Fourth celebrations, had suffered and matured under the loss of two devoted wives. Now Kate dreaded the departure of a good friend, a departure that would again throw the Lapwai church into turmoil over the choice of his successor: Archie Lawyer or Peter Lindsley. Once more

the Lord has shown himself above . . . All the Arts & Powers . . . Jonah's manoever failed . . .

and Peter was elected with almost twice the votes that Archie received.

Peter, in presiding for the first time over the Lapwai congregation, talked of these "stirring times" and Kate was proud of his "wisdom in speaking of swords being beaten into plowshares." That very first Sabbath after Mr. Deffenbaugh had left, it was obvious that Kate, "mine the only white face among these fierce bands," was justified in

fear of a scene . . . Archies last sermon he had much blessing the people . . . After he was done Abraham [Brooks] made a warm speech wanting to pay Archie for the year.

But of all people, Cap Kane came to the rescue, rose made a bitter reply, let them pay him who-ever wanted him & that now there was a tewash [?] to go before Pres. [Presbytery] to investigate Archie for stealing (keeping back money) perhaps it is so.

Feeling ran high, and through out the day tension mounted between the Lawyer and the McBeth factions. Later in the evening at the conclusion of a long prayer meeting, "much blessed singing," which Kate had started with "Tenderly the Shepherd", "the spirit came" and Abraham Brooks jumped up to confess his wrong, and then even the troublesome Jim Moses arose fearing his venom . . . [Kate] covered my face . . . but no the Lord had touched him also.⁴¹

Despite "the Lords doing to see the proud humbled," Kate had sympathy for Archie's wife,

poor Amy has not been out to church . . . and I cannot help but feel sorry for A. [Archie] how have I seen the mighty fallen!

Enoch and Rachel Pond also had had yearnings toward the coveted Lapwai pastorate, but Enoch's votes had been "quickly . . . handed over to Peter," and the Ponds were rewarded by a call to Wellpinit after "such a hard year among the Spokans." All the other Nez Perce missionaries were returned to their posts, except "poor Silas [Whitman] and Archie the stylish ones left out."⁴²

Two immediate problems faced the Lapwai church and its new pastor: first, the establishment of a rotating eldership, but Abraham [Brooks] don't want to stop being Elder—what children & yet how intriguing.

second, the disposition of Mr. Deffenbaugh's vacant house; because it was one of the best houses available; it was a choice prize, but

the Agent says Peter [Lindsley] shall not go into [it] . . . Oh Oh, but I will need wisdom from on high to keep from under the same law.

Kate was able to placate Peter by giving him her house and moving herself into Mr. Deffenbaugh's house "three miles up Lapwai Creek," nearer the agency and the church building.⁴³

Far removed from the Lapwai crises, in Mt. Idaho, Sue, who had always worked more behind the scenes in church politics than Kate, had no local church. Even during the Kamiah years because of her lameness, she had not attended regularly. The first Protestant service in Mt. Idaho was not held until the third year of Sue's residence, and that was by a Baptist, the Reverend J. B. York, in August, 1888.⁴⁴ It well may have been the Baptist interest in Mt. Idaho that spurred Mrs. W. S. Ladd of Portland to invite Mr. L. P. Brown "to dine with us." As president of the Women's Northern Pacific Presbyterian Board of Missions, Mrs. Ladd reported to Sue later in the year that Mr. Brown

seems a very well disposed man. He expressed his admiration for you and your work, and also seems desirous to have religious worship in the town of Mt. Idaho. He said he was willing to donate land for a Church and parsonage which I heartily wish you will have soon."

For Kate in Lapwai, the church problems were still seething when another Fourth of July was upon her. Following the strict dictates of her Calvinistic conscience, Kate again isolated herself in Lapwai loneliness during the celebrations, in protest to the mixed-up "heathenism races & worship together." But in that happier vale,

upon the other camp at Kamiah . . . the sun is shining & the Lord smiling . . . No heathenism around their temple like the feast of tabernacles. Miss S. L. McBeth Miss Axtell of Chicago & Mrs. Scott [of Mt. Idaho] there how

I would love to be there instead of sitting here *four miles from a human being* ... my rooster crowing or the cat purring ... the only sound.⁴⁶

The three visitors with many of the Christian Kamiahans then came on down to Kate's. Peter Lindsley's installation as the pastor of the Spalding church was an event of major importance to the Christian Nez Perces. If Kate's hospitality had been strained for Presbytery the year before, this time she was exhausted completely. Her sister Sue and the visiting guest from Chicago were brimming over with ambitious plans for "sending forth" each summer Nez Perces gospel teams to heathen tribes.⁴⁷ Miss Axtell and her two sisters, Mrs. I. P. Rumsey, whose husband was the president of the Chicago Board of Trade, and Mrs. Pratt of Denver, proposed to outfit these expeditions. Sue was the expert consultant as she had visited the Umatilla tribe the year before. Late into the night plans were made and discussed with many details. There were other guests too;

dear little Mrs. Wade from the Omaha Mission ... the Eaves family ... Dr. & Mrs. Williams so kind to me ...

For many months there had been talk about the semicentennial at Walla Walla of "The First Presbyterian Church in the Oregon Territory." Mr. Deffenbaugh was to speak about the work of the Spaldings, and on the following day, Saturday, August 18, exactly fifty years from the date of the establishment of "the first protestant church ... west of the Rockies ... organized at the Whitman station," James Hayes gave the evening address about the Nez Perce mission work. Glowing over the triumphal performance of her pupil, whom she'd drilled for weeks, Sue was there with her eastern guest. But not Kate, who "was so tired out working for my visitors ... did not feel able to go." Just perhaps Kate preferred the heat and the quiet of her Lapwai Valley to the shadow of Sue's reflected glory at Walla Walla.⁴⁸

As fall approached, Kate was concluding her third year in Lapwai, where she'd arrived with so much bitter resentment. Now she was writing in JOURNAL:

how warped & woven this people are in around my heart strings.

Kate's house was "never empty only in the evenings never had a



busier winter in my life." Up on the prairie buried in the snow, Sue too was busy with her New Carlisle, her dictionary, and correspondence with women whose assistance Miss Axtell had suggested. For both the McBeths, the coming New Year seemed to promise a better future for the Nez Perce mission work.⁴⁹

But almost immediately after the encouraging thoughts of 1889, another calamity broke over their hopes. Still smarting as "the son of a head chief", left out with no assignment in the church, Archie, the "grand minister", with his followers determined to remove Robert Williams once and for all from his favored position among the Christian Nez Percés. Late one dark night a Nez Perce policeman arrived at Robert's house in Kamiah and commanded him to follow. When they arrived at the "old school house," there was a

big fire in stove; they say, 'we punish you and they hold me over red hot stove long time.'

When Robert later told of the episode, his white inquisitor asked: "Why did you not fight, Robert?"

"Jesus did not fight, said Robert; and there was a little pause in the questioning.

"Besides," continued he, "I could not . . . it was a policeman in the uniform of the government who held me over the stove. I was very sick; I said, 'I faint, my brother, let me go.' They said, 'No, we punish you.'"

"Somebody said, 'let him go now,' and they put me out in the snow. It storm much that night."

Robert managed to find his horse, mount, and head it toward Mt. Idaho. It was all he could do to cling to the saddle, to keep conscious against the rising wind whipping snow across his open wounds. Hours later when he finally stumbled across Sue's threshold, his hair matted over his frost-bitten face, his burns raw and throbbing, he was hardly able to tell Sue what had occurred. Then Sue thanked God for all her experience in the St. Louis hospital barracks, for besides Robert's injuries, she had a frightening case of pneumonia to nurse. With only home remedies on the frontier, and a scarcity even of those, pneumonia more often signaled death than recovery. Sue marshalled her determination with her scant knowledge and battled day and night to keep alive her hope of the Nez Percés.

The necessity of warmth during the crisis for her delirious patient in her drafty cottage presented a serious problem. With spring almost around the corner, wood supplies in the little settlement were running dangerously low, and she had to appeal to her neighbors for help from their scanty fuel piles. But again God came to her rescue and Robert survived. During his convalescence, Robert showed more Indian taciturnity than she'd ever seen in him. He pledged her to secrecy before telling her that Solomon [Whitman] was the only one who defended him, that Felix [Corbett] was "also a good man." Even in her high indignation, Sue realized that she must cease to discuss the subject with Robert were she to retain any influence over his future actions.⁵⁰

Heart sick from worry over the terrifying reports Sue nursing Robert in isolated Mr. Idaho, Kate did not write in her JOURNAL all during the spring until May, when she recorded:

could not write up all the happenings on this reservation
... oh! oh!⁵¹

In addition to their usual worries and their deep concern over Robert Williams' recovery, the McBeths were alarmed over developments at the agency. Kate faithfully kept her sister informed of happenings in Lapwai, when violent dissension among the agency personnel brought from the East another investigating special agent. Much to the McBeths' profound relief, he dismissed "the incompatible Indian Agent", George Norris,⁵² and exonerated Robert Williams officially:

Robert Williams, Kamiah.

Sir

After carefully investigating at this Agency the charges made against you by the woman "Martha", I came to the conclusion and so decided that you were innocent of the charges, and that the accusations made against you, were the results of Malice.

It was evident to me that the woman "Martha" was an abandoned woman, and not to be believed under oath. I told the policeman "Roland" to so State to the people of Kamiah, and that in future I would entertain no such

malicious and trumped up charges emanating from such Sources.

Respectfully.

H. Heth, Spe'l. Agt.⁵³

Throughout the year, the agency continued to be in great confusion with agents coming and going as rapidly as the changing seasons. One of these "birds of passage" was the ex-agent Charles Monteith, who had stated that he was "leaving service for all time to come" when he had submitted his final report to Washington three years before.⁵⁴ And now here he was back again. Especially Kate in Lapwai feared that Charlie would reinstate her old enemy, Miller Crea:

Oh am I to have that family sitting in front of me here as years ago in Kamiah.⁵⁵

One Eastern visitor wrote home that Monteith, "that obnoxious⁵⁶ man," failed to secure the confirmation of his appointment because of the trip James Reuben took to Washington, D.C., to present the united opposition, "the ill will and enmity of nearly every member of the tribe."⁵⁷

Soon a fresh rumor was whispered about the Lapwai community. Another extraordinary special agent was expected, a phenomenon, a woman! The apprehensive McBeths queried each other: would this new invasion by the government tip the scales of their Nez Perces' lives toward Egypt or Israel?

CHAPTER 14

THE MEASURING WOMAN

After the flurry over Charles Monteith, although government agents came and went, it was the same Special Agent Heth, who had cleared Robert Williams, that was the harbinger of a revolution which was soon to transform the Nez Perce Reservation. Despite her innate struggle for independence from Sue, in emergencies like this, Kate hurried to confer with the "little mother" in the New Carlisle at Mt. Idaho.

As soon as she was alone with Sue, Kate murmured: "It has come at last, the day we have been fearing for the Nez Perces."

"God," replied Sue confidently, "has taken good care of us. Has he not kept us despite Charlie? Has not Agent Heth entirely exhonored Robert from all that vicious slander those malingering Lawyers have invented against him?"

"Oh, oh, Sister, it is just this Agent Heth who called upon me that rainy afternoon a few days ago to tell me in the strictest confidence what is coming. He warned me to tell neither whites nor Nez Perces a word, but of course I had to tell you."

"Well, I should think so. Strange he'd tell you who talks so much. Why didn't he come to me who has the material and spiritual welfare of this people on my heart day and night? Pray, what secret did he lay on you?"

"A Miss Fletcher from back East, from Washington and Boston, is to come to allot the lands of the reservation in severalty to the members of the tribe."

"You mean the Miss Fletcher from Harvard? What can she know about my Nez Perces?"

"The same. I dread the summer and all the unknown struggles it will bring. I suppose it must be carried out, but I feel sad, just the same."

"Of course we knew Charlie and how to proceed with him. Our God pointed the way; but another woman! How she may

upset our people!"

"What a *tukin* there will be when this is announced in Council, and the poor Nez Perces not ready for it."

"For fifteen years I have given my all to lead my Nez Perces to the inevitable day when they must stand on their own with the white man."

"Our time, Sue, has been far too short. They are just beginning to comprehend Christian ways. Oh, oh, if you only had tried to consider all and not only the select few!"

"My Boys," tartly rejoined Sue, "will lead the way. Robert must set the example to all the rest. Besides it will lessen the power of the agents in silent league with the liquor merchants and cattlemen. Now they cannot push my people off their remaining land if this goes through."

"Don't you be so certain, Sue; off here in Mt. Idaho you are more sheltered from all this politicking. In Lapwai great responsibility will fall upon my shoulders. How can Miss Fletcher determine the true Nez Perces from outsiders and interlopers? Any way you look at it, our people will lose; they will be completely at the mercy and judgment of these eastern idealists sent out here by an unfeeling government. How will she, even with the best of intentions, which I doubt, separate the wheat from the tares? Oh, that we more entirely had made them understand the Seventh Commandment!"

"My Boys" have pointed the way. Robert has been cleared by the government in that affair."

"These new agents may even be Episcopalians. How shall we trust them?"

"Wait and see, Kate, God will lead us. After the encroachment of miners all over the reservation and after the Sodom and Gomorrah that has erupted at the old wintering grounds, practically at Lewiston, so near Lapwai, something must be done. Good may come of this after years of broken treaties, lies, and deception."

And, indeed, there was no fair solution for white encroachment on the better Indian lands. It was a complex problem with all American Indians, not only for the Nez Perces. One of the best expedients for the protection of Indians in their land rights was initiated by Miss Alice C. Fletcher, an

anthropologist and a student of the American Indians. It had been her pioneering work in first originating and then administering small loans to the Plains Indians that had led to the experiment of allotting land in severalty among the Omahas. The sheer force of her determination and her remarkably able presentation of facts and proofs, had been largely instrumental in securing the passage, February 8, 1887, by Congress of the General Land in Severalty Act, commonly called either the Allotment Act or the Dawes Bill.

Privately tutored as most of the educated women were of her generation, Miss Fletcher had embarked as an anthropologist long before the word was common in western vocabulary. As a result of her scholarly and successful work with the Dakotas, she had been appointed assistant in the anthropology department in the Peabody Museum at a time when women were scarcely tolerated in those sacred halls of Harvard University. Just a few months before coming to Idaho, Miss Fletcher had completed on January 17, 1889, allotting the Winnebago tribe. Her outward self-assurance in the successful completion of any mission shone from her wide-set, direct, dark eyes that never wavered in self-doubt. As she ignored all opposition, so she ignored her lameness, the result of a serious bout with rheumatic fever, suffered during the early years she lived among the Plains Indians.

Thus Miss Fletcher arrived with her assistant, friend and companion, Miss Gay, two New England spinsters to do the impossible on the Nez Perce Reservation. From that very first day at the Hotel de France in Lewiston, Miss Fletcher needed to muster every ounce possible of poise, assurance, and firmness. Hardly had the two women reached their rooms before visitors began arriving. The early "prominent people" came to feel out the temper of this stranger, Special Agent of the U.S. Government, a woman sent into this wild country on such an important official mission.¹ These callers were those the local Lewiston paper had warned about, "growling [with] opposition"; they were the forerunners of many more to come.² The cattlemen inquired to find out

about 'their rights' upon the Reservation . . . completely ignorant of the intent of the Severalty Act . . . There is

nothing romantic about these cattlemen. For the greater part, they are farmers in the neighborhood who raise crops on their own land and turn out their cattle to overrun the Reservation. We are told that there are 10,000 head now eating the grass of the Indians, who are also cattlemen in their own right, and have none too much pasturage for their own herds.

"Not knowing how to approach a lady" these men "with profuse expectoration" came day after day, and were overheard complaining:

Why in thunder did the Government send a woman to do this work? We could have got a holt of a man.

Listening carefully and politely to their pleas that the Nez Percés' land be allocated "down in the canyons where they belong," Miss Fletcher inevitably closed the interviews by bidding them a cheerful adieu with an encouraging word or two about the better times coming, when there will be a reign of law and order in the country, which does not always call up a pleasing prospect in the mind of the cattlemen.

Jane Gay, recording these experiences, reported that one of the most disgruntled pioneers, really shaken over such a radical innovation, burst out with proper "border emphasis":

Law! ... law! ... it! what do we want with law? We don't want no law. Never had no law; we've got along so far taking care of ourselves; we done as we wanted to and aint got no use for the law in this country.³

Eight years older than Alice Fletcher, Jane Gay was nearly sixty in 1889. Descended from a long line of well-established New Englanders, Miss Gay had first known Miss Fletcher when they were young girls attending a Female Seminary in New York state. For years they had gone their separate ways. Jane's last forty years had been diversified: a short tenure as a school teacher, then extensive traveling in Europe with thirteen years' residence in England after an unfortunate love affair in the states. From her background of wealth and position, Miss Gay had entree into influential government circles in Washington which she now called home. Through the friendship of Miss Fletcher and Miss Gay, many prominent men in official positions found themselves

exposed to the magnetic influence and driving idealism of these two women. Smaller in stature than Miss Fletcher and more retiring in personality, Miss Gay dubbed herself The Cook of the expedition. Her sole purpose was to shield Miss Fletcher as much as possible from the exigencies of every day existence; to take from her shoulders the details of their make-shift living arrangements; to leave her free to concentrate on the allotment.

When she reached Lapwai, Miss Fletcher began in earnest to collect her company. She was "empowered to engage surveyors" and was delighted to find for a head surveyor, Edson Briggs, a Vermonter, "who has been West long enough to thoroughly know the country." It seemed a good omen to the women to discover that this native New Englander was "a big, broad-shouldered man, with a face that wins your confidence at once." Then there was the official photographer, who was responsible for the priceless pictures now on deposit at the Idaho Historical Society in Boise. From these glass plates Jane Gay selected her favorites and included them with her own sketches in letters she wrote back home to Washington, D.C. For an interpreter and driver, they hired James Stuart, who had returned to the reservation four years earlier from the Forest Grove, Oregon, school. As the need arose, they hired other more or less temporary helpers.⁴

On their first Sabbath at the agency Miss Fletcher and Miss Gay attended the Lapwai Church, where they watched the faces of Peter Lindsley's Nez Perces audience, but understood not a word of his vernacular. Here it was that they first saw Kate and were immediately conscious of Kate's skepticism:

We noticed a bright-eyed, calm-faced white woman moving among them as one who was about her Father's business. She seemed the guiding spirit of the service, which moved on in consonance with the dignity and sweetness of her countenance. After the benediction, she introduced herself to us as the missionary, Miss Kate McBeth, and it was interesting to note her scrutiny of us, the guarded expression of her eyes, her cautious speech, the evident search for indications of our dispositions toward her Indians. It spoke volumes of her compressed life under the bonds of her position. By and by she

seemed to have concluded to trust us and with a smile gave us welcome to her little home.⁵

The Eastern ladies still accustomed to civilized living conditions were shocked to find Kate's "little home . . . temporary quarters in an old warehouse."

Miss Fletcher's plan was first to explain to the Nez Perces the provisions of the Severalty Act, the advantages to each family in the allotment of their tribal lands. In essence: to each head of a household 160 acres were to be allotted; to each single person over 18 years of age, 80 acres; to each single person under 18 years of age, 40 acres. But here at the heart of the reservation, at the agency, there were no Indians; they had quietly disappeared into the surrounding hills:

It is lonesome here; it is queer and the longer we stay the queerer it grows . . . brooding quiet is all around us.

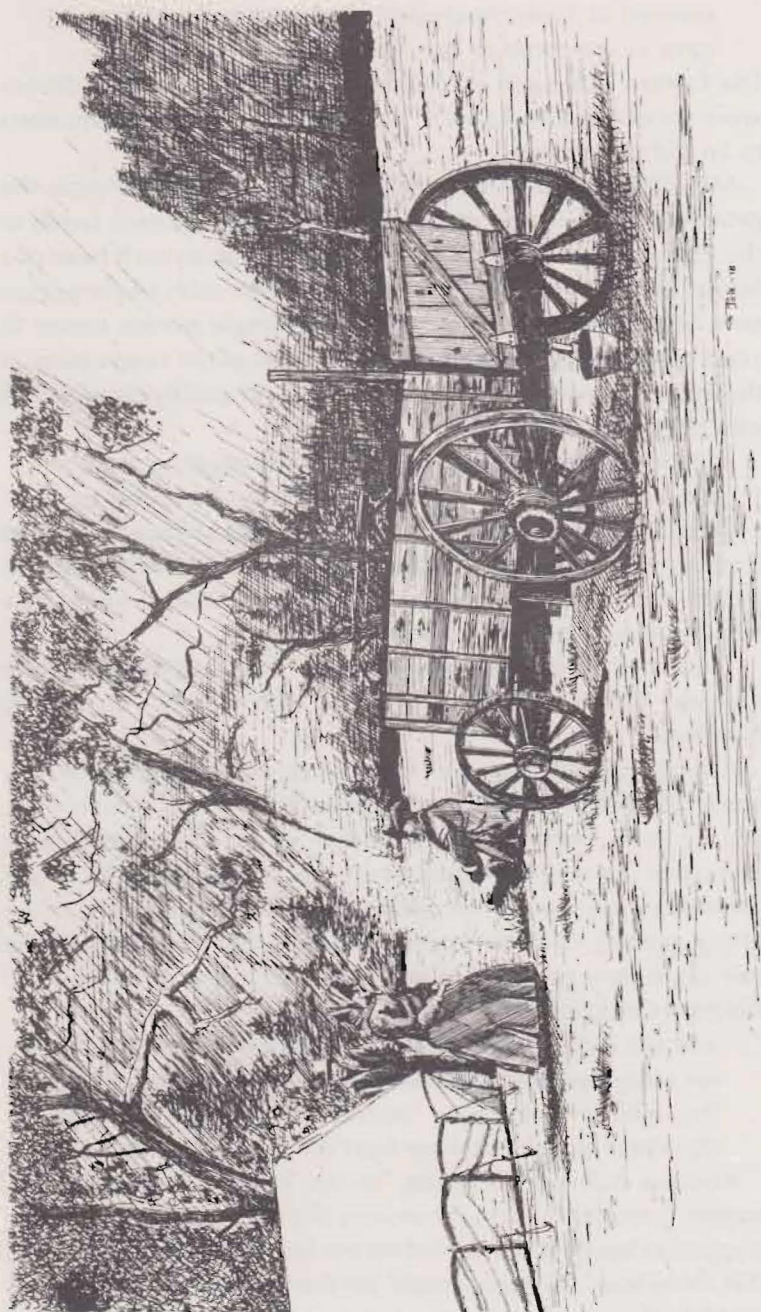
Only a few responded to a council called at Lapwai, so Miss Fletcher with characteristic directness decided that if the Indians would not come to her, she would go to them. Their new missionary acquaintance advised them:

"You must go where the majority of Christian Indians are in Kamiah. It is," Kate assured them with a sigh, "an earthly Paradise."

After much haggling over the purchase of horses, which they knew the Indians had priced exorbitantly, they left Lapwai on the first of July, with the thermometer at 102, climbing Craig's Mountain. To move the equipment and camping gear of such a surveying party over foreign terrain they had borrowed from the acting agent a Webster wagon and a team of work horses. The first night they camped on the grade; by the second they had reached Cold Springs at the top:

and the temperature dropped as daylighted waned . . . we struggled into our overcoats and crouched within the radius of [the fire] . . . in the morning there was ice in the water bucket and hoar frost stiffened our tent cloth.⁶

Another half day's jogging "in the buggy . . . an open box wagon" brought them to the vicinity of Cottonwood, where they stopped at Squirrel Camp to shoe the horses. Here they decided that there was "no decent road" for the Webster wagon, so they sent it back to Lapwai with the heaviest trunk. While they waited



for the return of their driver, the Misses Fletcher and Gay "made a flying trip to Mt. Idaho." After their visit with Sue, Alice Fletcher took the time enroute to their base in Kamiah to write to Kate:

Wednesday Eve. and Thursday A.M. I had the pleasure of seeing your Sister at Mt. Idaho. And I cannot tell you how I enjoyed meeting that noble woman. You and your Sister are an honor to our sex and to the grand work of the world. God Bless you. You are rewarded indeed by the people whom you have led forward.⁷

As the allotting party started out again toward Kamiah, the Eastern strangers "were confident that she [Sue] did not deliberately plan the subversion of the Agency System." Miss Fletcher in her business-like, decisive manner summarized the whole matter to Miss Gay by concluding with finality,

"It is obviously absurd that a consecrated, lame, little woman like Sue McBeth, isolated 'on the fringe of civilization,' should have been charged with inciting the Nez Perces against the Government. I shall certainly take steps to see to it that the proper authorities know more about this misrepresentation!"

Finally after another hard long day of traveling, the Measuring Woman and her companion found themselves stumbling down the steep sides of a new canyon into the Kamiah Valley, which "lay like a haven of rest and peace, lovely in the rain washed atmosphere but so very silent." Miss Kate had generously offered them the use of the deserted Mission House to establish their headquarters. In contrast to her present warehouse quarters, Kate had given a glowing description of the Kamiah cottage, but to the women so newly arrived from the East, it appeared

a poor bit place . . . a rough, unfinished board box [with] a chimney at one end made of stones and sticks and mud, a rail fence surrounded it, mullein stalks grew among the burnt grass in the yard, and there was some sort of curtain over the western window, and three magpies on the wooden steps.⁸

Back in Lapwai Kate "had finished her mind" quickly about the visitors. When they left, she noted in her JOURNAL:

Oh! Oh! how many seasons of anxiety missionaries do

have on a reservation. Fletcher is on road to Kamiah all mission S. [schools] & those under their influence are ready for their land. May the Lord bless her in this good work.

After Kate had seen the Measuring Woman and The Cook off for Kamiah, fortified with all the helpful information she could give them, her life in the hot Lapwai valley returned to its more normal pace. Even though the "native pastor" who had so impressed the visitors had been relieved by the resignation of the "thorn in his side . . . his troublesome elder [Jim Moses]," he annoyed Kate because

Peter gets wise so quickly . . . Oh I never dreamt the pastor so ignorant as not to know how to put a vote to the congregation . . . I had to speak up to the pulpit.⁹

Although Peter and his moderating were an anxiety, and although Kate at this time, innately conservative, was disturbed about coming changes, she was enheartened by two issues of the OCCIDENT telling of the McBeths' work. W.O. Forbes writing in June, "North Pacific Notes," stated that the Nez Perce tribe was of first importance in the area and told of the two schools, Sue's for men, Kate's for women and girls. He mentioned Felix Corbett, representing the First Church of Kamiah at General Assembly in New York. Elder Corbett had traveled East with Mr. Deffenbaugh, now Home Missionary for the Idaho Presbytery. Kate considered Felix's being a delegate "an honor for the Nez Perces indeed." The next month, July, there appeared an article devoted to Sue alone: "A Woman Who Teaches Theology." Among their blessings the sisters exulted in the vindication that General Heth had given to Robert; their steadfast faith in him had been completely justified and they could breathe more easily:

To God be all the praise . . . He has not clean gone forever!¹⁰

But it was no blessing to be facing another Lapwai Fourth alone. Because she had spent "two lonely sad 4th & wanted to be again among the people," Kate told Eddie [Connors?] and Abraham Brooks that "if there was to be no heathen performances or racing to send down for me." Benjamin came

for her

in his fine new waggon . . . [and] we listened attentively to *Mechats* [Charlie?] address. Ed [Connors?] his interpreter on horseback. "His policy was just the same it had ever been" the whites are trying to make trouble do not listen to them — poor Charley the spirits were droopy all day . . . so many in paint & blankets many down the river Indians.

Mr. McConville was "in Girls S." and Mr. Eaves, who had survived several "immediate dismissals" was still school superintendent. In the quiet of the evening Kate and Miss L. [Lucile Eaves?] to calm their jangled nerves

were crossing over to see some sick boys [when] we heard the swift feet of ponies coming & lo! the two naked riders came in sight. No saddle no anything!

Through out the night, stomping and war dancing with the throbbing drums continued, to the listening apprehensive Christians, a perfect hell of gambling and drinking. Among the heathen, wives were exchanged on the throw of the dice — or so rumor hissed.¹¹

Meanwhile settling down to a routine in the Mission cabin at Kamiah, Miss Fletcher was all ready and waiting for the Indians to appear for allotment, but it continued to be "the stillest place I ever knew." Following the McBeths' advice, Miss Fletcher called for another meeting in the Kamiah church to explain the plan of allotment as she had attempted to do in Lapwai. Miss Gay, remaining discreetly at the Mission house, heard from The Photographer that "they are not pleasant to look at . . . some of the old ones scowled as [Miss Fletcher] passed by them." Accompanied by her interpreter, Miss Fletcher entered the building, "just as calm and smiling as if she was teaching a primary . . . Sunday School down East." Standing before the blanketed mob, she looked "straight before her a few minutes until there was absolute silence." As she slowly spoke, waiting for the translation following in Nez Perce, James Stuart's fingers "worked nervously and his eyes wandered weakly over the crowd." Briggs, the surveyor, all two hundred and sixty pounds of him with the "muscles of a prize Vermonter . . . sauntered carelessly up" and stood on the other side of Fletcher. He alone

of the whites knew of the threats of "punishment" that had been relayed to James Stuart if he remained as Miss Fletcher's interpreter.

It was almost impossible to convince the Nez Percés of the necessity for individual land ownership. The majority of the tribe agreed with Chief Joseph, who opposed the Severalty Act, asserting that since all the land belonged to the tribe anyway, there was no sense in parceling it out among individuals. Without the endorsement given the project by the McBeths, much more time would have been required to persuade the Indians to apply for their allotments. When at last the break that Miss Fletcher had been seeking came, it was directly traceable to the McBeths. Robert Williams

was cordial in his greetings to which his halting English did scant justice. He had talked much with Miss McBeth about this law, and said he, 'I take my land now but my people not all understand yet.'¹²

Sue found it both comforting and gratifying to hear from her recent callers of their beginning success in Kamiah, especially that her beloved Robert had made the initial move in the allotment. Her feelings of "being at these ends of the earth places" had been relieved somewhat by the visit of the women from the East, for had she not seized the opportunity to tell them her side of the agency difficulties. Sue quickly recognized that in her listeners she could reach official ears both in Washington and in Philadelphia. Sue maintained that

foreseeing the changes which were so rapidly coming . . . she tried to teach her pupils something of the nature of the United States' government and laws, and unfortunately, she began with the Declaration of Independence.¹³

Even the new summer stage schedule brought civilization closer to Mt. Idaho: "stage now leaves Lewiston at 4 A.M. and arrives at Mt. Idaho at 10 P.M." Granting a charter for the future "territorial University" in northern Idaho and "the little hope [of] a R.R." to Lewiston seemed events far removed from the everyday concerns of the McBeths in August when

the smoke [which] will soon be thick enough to slice out of the air with a knife . . . [because] forest fires have

demoralized the Milner Trail [leading into Mt. Idaho] This was the same extensive Idaho "burn" Jane Gay watched apprehensively in the Kamiah valley,

the tall columns of flame as the solitary pine trees on the hills are consumed . . . It creeps nearer and nearer until it seizes the hay stacks of the Indians and our world is all yellow and burnt while the smoke is so dense that it is high noon before the sun casts a faint and blurred shadow.¹⁴

The McBeths were delighted to find these two New England spinsters so much in accord with their own ideas and sympathetic with their work. They were pleased that

they not only strengthened the cause of right by their teaching, but by their example. There was no business done in Miss Fletcher's office on Sabbath day.

Particularly they approved of Miss Fletcher's helping the Indians choose "the very best of the land." But even here with good intentions there were difficulties. The first requirement of every Nez Perce was "a good spring on that piece of ground." With very good reasons in his own mind, Yellow Bull was especially obdurate about wanting Red Rock Springs. Miss Fletcher carefully pointed out to him that the land was not good there, and that he should have better land for farming success, in which he was interested. But to all her arguments, he answered:

No. I drank of that spring when I was a boy, and when sick and tossing in fever in Indian Territory I drank of it in my dreams. Give me the Red Rock Spring or I want nothing.

Miss Fletcher worked out a satisfactory compromise with Yellow Bull, allotting to him the Red Rock Spring but in addition a piece of good farming land.¹⁵

Miss Fletcher estimated that it took an average of forty miles' traveling for the allotment of each family. Edson Briggs and his linemen discovered readily that theirs was no simple task to cover some 800,000 acres," canons cut into gulches, broken by hills and buttes and rocky wastes and transversed by a confusing network of cattle and pony trails." The surveying crew soon discovered that the "original survey does

not conform to the terms of the treaty . . . subsequent surveys have been run, each new one inside the last . . . and the Nez Perces know this." The rigid standards that the rock-ribbed New Englanders had set for themselves could not hold with the Nez Perce workers. The Indians working with the crew

were not used to hard work. They can ride ponies all day but walking is a new sensation, their leg muscles are flabby and sharp stones cut mocassioned feet . . . The poor fellows succumb crossing a canon of only half pitch and they faint on the mountains when the thermometer is only 110 in the shade.

Even making allowances for these extreme conditions, the Misses Fletcher and Gay found the Nez Perces disappointing workmen. Years later writing from her home in Washington, D.C., Jane Gay would still maintain

Work is the only salvation for anybody and I for one do not see the use of trying to keep alive a race that will not work. You see I am not a missionary in spirit.¹⁶

Partially because of the McBeths' devotion to the Kamiah church, the Allotting Woman and her helper were shocked at its dilapidated condition. Just before leaving for the East in November of 1889, the two women made a pact with the members of the church. If the Indians would supply the labor of restoration during the next summer, when Misses Fletcher and Gay returned, they would bring sufficient money to buy the necessary building materials for the sadly needed refurbishing. Saw mills were few, crude and inefficient, under the authority of usually unsympathetic white men, so that in the midst of an abundance of ponderosa pines, building lumber was at a great premium. The Kamiah church, erected 19 years before, had been thrown together in a most haphazard manner, designed only for the immediate present. Jane Gay has left a graphic description of its condition:

the foundations . . . were sections of pine trees and were fast rotting away . . . some had gone quite to pieces, letting the building settle at one side. The weather boarding was warped by the sun, with its nails protruding, and the shingles no longer kept out the rain. There was but a faint indication that the walls had ever

been painted outside, and within they were tattered and stained. The steps were dangerous . . . so also the stovepipe rusted full of holes, which, in place of chimney, carried the smoke through the roof. Everything was pitifully poor and mean. . .

The poor little box! some twenty by forty feet in size, with a rough floor and ceiling of boards painted a pink blue, with walls of paper (pasted on cloth, as is the fashion in the far west) split and torn in all directions and of two distinct patterns and colors, although that was not now noticeable, both having grown so dim with age and smoke and dust. The benches had once been painted blue and there were green shades to the windows. The pulpit, made after the similitude of a dry good box and mounted upon a platform two steps high, was painted white with sky blue panels. The top of the pulpit was on a level with the collar bones of the preacher and was surmounted by a section of inclined plane which left the top of his head visible to the congregation.¹⁷

The Misses Fletcher and Gay spent the worst winter months back home in the East because the weather on the Camas Prairie made "the allotment of eighty acres of unbroken snow" impossible. But during their absence they were not unaware of the plight of the Nez Perces and of that of Kate and Sue. While they were in Washington, D.C., and on trips to Philadelphia and Boston, they talked to those concerned with the Nez Perce Indians, and greatly influenced the official reports. The statements in the 1889 report of the Board of Foreign Missions of the Presbyterian Church included in the annual report of the Secretary of the Interior are an echo of Fletcher and Gay's conclusions. It is significant that for the first time Kate is given prominence over Sue. Possibly it was due to Misses Fletcher and Gay having had more contact with Kate, or it may reflect the results of Sue's withdrawal from reservation control:

Miss Kate McBeth has carried on a somewhat different work from that of her sister — among the Indian women at Lapwai, where she has been the only representative of the Board, except the native pastor of the Lapwai church . . . she has embraced such opportunities as an

incompatible Indian Agent has allowed [Norris], for instruction among the girls connected with the Government school. Her efforts, however, have been greatly restricted even in Sabbath-school work by the official who should have given full and free opportunity for labor among the Indians.¹⁸

In far-away Idaho it was another bad winter with illness among the Nez Perces. At the Government school there were 125 children, many of whom were sick. Some recovered but not "poor Joseph Lowrie . . . [who lay] under the locust trees . . . poor things what an exchange from this reservation to heaven dear Lord may many be there." As spring crept over the Lapwai and Kamiah valleys and gradually began melting the winter's deep snow at Mt. Idaho, the McBeths joined all the Nez Perces, for once heathen and Christian, in anticipation of the return of the Measuring Woman and The Cook. Kate particularly looked forward to her renewed association with the two friends; she labeled Miss Fletcher "a talented, brave woman." Now everyone knew what to expect of these strange goings-on, this allotment.¹⁹

While the two Eastern women had been absent, they had concerned themselves not only about the decrepitude of the Kamiah Church but also over Kate's wretched living conditions in Lapwai. They were righteously indignant over Kate's self-effacing compliance with her housing arrangements. Ever since they had known her, Kate had been existing month to month under the threat of being summarily ordered out of her wretched old warehouse into "a potato shed . . . a converted root house." Even though she herself had to live the year round in an abandoned shack, Kate had done her best to secure for the two strangers when they first arrived as comfortable quarters as possible both in Lapwai and in Kamiah. Therefore, the Misses Fletcher and Gay's "thoughts had been busy all the way" back to Idaho with plans for bettering the living arrangements of their friend, Miss Kate. They expected their own quarters to be in "some one of the unoccupied Government buildings . . . at least we belived we knew." They were wholly unprepared for the ominous faces of James Stuart and his wife Harriet, who greeted them when they stepped down from the wagon in Lapwai:

"We've done the best we could, but this house is a sore eyed

hospital, and the front room is a dead house, and the bed they left for you had a girl die on it two days ago, and I threw the bed and blankets out of the window, but it is too bad."

The new arrivals "gazed speechlessly" at each other and at the interior of the house which "was absolutely empty [except for] an iron bedstand and a cracked box stove." "Mr. [School] Superintendent [who thought they] had something to do with his removal" sat on his porch nearby gloating over their predicament. Evening was approaching, only "three or four hours of daylight left." Again Kate came to their rescue instead of their aiding her. Their boxes carefully packed and stored last December, had been "broken open and empty." With carbolic acid which "the resident physician [Dr. Gibson?] had been compelled to supply" the three white women with Harriet, James, and Ed Briggs "set to work to achieve our independence" of the filth. With their "own camp cot . . . a sack filled with wheat stubble," and "three empty packing boxes and a barrel for furniture . . . borrowed from the well disposed industrial teacher" [Mr. Eaves?] by nightfall they too had living arrangements comparable to Kate's root house.²⁰

This inauspicious welcome set the tone of the spring months of 1890 on the reservation for the visitors and for the McBeths. Although the missionaries and the "Williams faction" during the past year had taken comfort from the government's clearance of Robert, there had continued to be dire rumblings from the Lawyers' friends in the tribe. Sue had frequently worried over Robert because he "has been spitting blood ever since his last arrest and fearful ride — caused by the Lawyers."²¹ Kate, nearer to the center of the rumors, reflected her nervousness in her reports to Sue who roundly scolded her for even admitting such weakness and lack of faith. Within a month after the return of the Misses Fletcher and Gay another storm broke over the head of Robert. This one came from Presbytery: the McBeths were frantic. To them a possible censure from the Church Court was much more damning than a civil court decision. Another woman [Alice?] had "tamipanik" against Robert, claiming that "he was two nights and two days alone with her."

This trial was held in the church with the assembled dignitaries and "all the ponies and people . . . in great numbers . . . under the

trees." According to Kate's account to Sue, it promised to be a great show, a true gathering "like the battle of Armegidon on the reservation." Kate's front door step provided a ring-side seat from which she reported each detail as the trial dragged on for three endless days of anxiety. "It did not commence until this morning — they say She tells her say as if streight they cannot make her contradict herself."

The Williams connections and the McBeths had scoured the reservation to gather up all possible witnesses for Robert. "Miss Fletcher has done all she could," and even Mr. Adair, now the pastor at Moscow, approached the new agent [Warren D. Robbins] with the McBeth story. But he was inclined to believe that "he [Robert] should at least be removed so great the dissention." Kate's good friend Mr. Eaves arrived to help from Portland. Robert's greatest difficulty lay in securing Nez Perce witnesses for at the conclusion of the first day's testimony "the committee gave any one the privilege . . . to speak for R. [Robert] but all silence . . ." There was of course James Hayes, "Robert's son-in-the-Lord." Kate in opposition to Archie had effectively backed Peter Lindsley for pastor at Lapwai, so that now he returned her support by helping Robert. Moses Monteith, still a Licentiate of Sue's at Mt. Idaho, joined him.

But those Lawyers! They had an endless array of witnesses; besides their own followers they brought in Charlie Monteith, "a Mrs. Andrews and Nine Pipe's sister," and Silas, "yes, even Silas Whitman!" Among the hangers-on was the same Martha, the former accuser of Robert, who "is lying out in front of my door with a friend, a sign of triumph." The McBeths were appalled; "I do not feel I can hold out much longer, little sleep . . . how often I have been on my knees today . . . it will be all right in heaven at least." Wednesday it was "still going on . . . for when yesterday was ended R. [Robert] seemed trodden down." Benjamin, "the prosecutor . . . ought to be a Lawyer he conducts his case with such skill." Finally late Thursday afternoon it was over, and the verdict given:

Robert is silenced for six months . . . The Committee have suspended him as pastor forbidding him to preach or baptize or to serve the Lord's Supper, and have ordered their verdict to be read in the church . . . Silas

Whitman goes to Kamiah for that time . . . the sentence was very imprudent by his own statement.

Before Kate sealed her letter to send to Mt. Idaho with Miss Fletcher, she concluded her account — written upside down across the top of the page — "Sue Sue but this has been a hard week . . . Oh how I long to see you & yet could I ever go through this again."

The allotment party left Lapwai the next morning, Friday, carrying Kate's report to Sue, but they did not know that "the anxious little White Mother," sixty miles away, had already heard the verdict. The evening before as soon as the news seeped out into the church yard, Mark Arthur was on horse back headed up Craig's Mountain. The next morning he was at Sue's door with that one word safely on his tongue: "Imprudent . . . what did it mean was the question all the night through."²²

Kate was not the only one to leave an account of the Presbytery trial of Robert Williams; Jane Gay told her version in letters home:

The trial was a sad farce . . . before this body of unsuspecting ministers . . . the testimony was all in the vernacular, the interpreter doubtful and the commission mistook the identity of the witnesses.

Like Kate, the Misses Fletcher and Gay recognized that "the prosecuting Indians were skillful, some of them being astute enough to blind any set of well meaning men ignorant of the Indians' language and tactics." They admired Robert who "in the midst of it all . . . a great inconsequential buzz . . . stood . . . calmly waiting the issue . . . [and afterwards] went home to Kamiah and . . . took to mission work outside, and bided his time with sweet and unresentful patience." There was no doubt in these women's minds of the outcome:

Miss Sue at Mt. Idaho, has set herself to right the wrong and we know that she will do it.

But there was one outcome they had not anticipated, "hard as that . . . trial was on R. [Robert] it finished all opposition to the Allotment." Even though "Archie & all his clan went to Miss Fletcher & registered," the Yankee special agent and her assistant were not won over by the charming Lawyers. They completely adopted the missionary sisters' opinion that

Archie Lawyer is a native minister of the Gospel, ordained before he had experienced a change of heart. He is an intriguing fellow with no character to lose; always in mischief and in debt, always determined to lead somebody some way. If he possessed less wit, he would not be so dangerous; as it is, his influence is pernicious in the extreme. He stands for the power of the old chiefs . . . ²³

Back at Lapwai, the Misses Fletcher and Gay with Kate had been "all . . . astounded . . . [by] the actual appointment of a right man to the right place," Colonel Edward McConville. The year before when they arrived in Idaho and were collecting their supplies in Lewiston, where he was working for "the most important merchant of the place" [J.P. Vollmer]. Mr. McConville "had offered them every assistance and advised great patience." They remembered with gratitude his help and now were hopeful that his appointment would not only aid their allotting but also might alleviate Kate's difficulties with the agency. On Memorial Day, Kate with her two friends walked across the agency grounds to be an audience for Mr. McConville's "procession of school children going out to decorate the graves of the soldiers who slew their fathers in the Joseph War." Nearby were "some smaller mounds of the little ones who died here last winter." The three women stood watching "the procession limp disjointedly along" carrying "a diminutive flag . . . borrowed from the school doctor," because the Washington, D.C., bureaucracy had failed to send the requested flag in time for the day's observance. Tied to the end of a fish pole, the flag bobbed above the heads of the children as they entered the burial grounds, "doing their best to keep step with no fife or drum, but singing 'John Brown's Body lies a-mouldering in the grave.' " ²⁴

While the allotting party remained in Lapwai, Kate's interests were deepened and widened. She was drawn into all the activities of Miss Fletcher and Gay, sharing their experiences. When Chief Joseph arrived from the Colville Reservation in Washington, to consult the Measuring Woman, the two government emissaries kept their own counsel. Contrary to the McBeths' antipathy toward this "heathen," Miss Gay recorded that

It was good to see an unsubjugated Indian . . . He cannot be persuaded to take his land upon the Reservation. He will have none but the Wallowa valley, from which he was driven; he will remain landless and homeless if he cannot have his own again . . . One could not help respecting the man who still stood firmly for his rights, after having fought and suffered and been defeated in the struggle for their maintenance.²⁵

The heat clamped down on the breathless Lapwai Valley and the days were crowded and busy "from sunrise, when the Indian made his descent upon our quarters, until nightfall, when he mounted his pony and loped away up the trail and the cloud of dust which marked his going, came in at our windows." But in the cooler evenings there was respite and companionship, time to reminisce, to exchange experiences of their past lives.

Miss Kate's old root house has an attraction for us all. Sitting out before her door one warm starlight night while we fought the ferocious mosquitoes, she spoke to us of her early trials as a missionary.

By now, the Easterners felt that they knew both sisters fairly well, and they had heard much about them from others on the reservation, Nez Perces as well as whites. During the long twilight evening talks, gradually they came to understand much of the sisters' unhappiness with each other during the last ten years, isolated in Idaho. Miss Fletcher's shrewd understanding of human nature combined with Miss Gay's sympathetic questioning little by little ferreted out the sisters' unspoken animosities, the heart aches, and misunderstandings.

"You know," Kate continued hesitantly, "I have earned a three months' furlough to go home this summer."

"Well, why don't you make arrangements and go?", the practical Alice Fletcher asked.

"Oh, Sue — Sue has never herself been back. She seems to have no longings like mine to see the old home in Ohio and our kin, or if she does, she is so opposed that I cannot go."

"Of course," Miss Gay probed, "when you came to work with your older sister in '79, she'd been here many years before you and was naturally free with her advice."

"Oh, not so many years, only six but yes, she did give me

then and continues to give me more direction than is necessary. However, I cannot now desert her or leave her like Naomi in an alien land."

"I hear," pursued Jane Gay, "there will be some doings here in Lapwai over the Fourth of July."

"A most wicked celebration, a pagan festival fostered by our evil agents and the worst elements of the white people in Lewiston. Now why don't you go up to Kamiah and see the decent commemoration there our Christian Nez Perces led by Robert will have? It will be an all day affair on a noble plane, freed from the vices of racing war steeds, and —" Kate leaned closer to them to whisper. Darkness obscured the blushes of the three spinsters.

The advice was taken, and Miss Gay described the Kamiah Fourth for her eastern correspondents:

It was . . . ushered in by the meeting, at the church, of the whole community, for many miles around; big and little, ponies, dogs and babies, and a happier set of creatures I never saw. They formed a procession, headed by the Sunday School children and marched in and out among the pine trees up to the church, singing something which we could not understand, the refrain only being intelligible: 'Hurrah! ' Then there were speeches and songs galore, and the native pastor [Robert Williams or Silas Whitman?] blessed the people, after which there was a great scurrying to make ready the barbecue and the feast.

The work seemed to have been perfectly planned.

There were men appointed to make the fires and bring wood and water, and women to prepare the meat and fish and others to cook it. Great strips of beef were strung on poles before the fire and salmon stretched over the glowing coals and pots of soup hung above the blaze; and all to the accompaniment of merry laughter and cheerful chatter.

Tents had been pitched the day before, each family bringing its own, and there was a large one in which all the people gathered for meetings three times during the

day. Cloths were stretched upon the grass and tables prepared, each family having brought its own dishes and contributed to the food supply. The people were served by the elders and deacons of the church, the old people first, the children last . . .

not until the last one of the great company had left the table . . . did . . . [the] servers submit to be waited upon . . .

you would have said that we were a very patriotic crowd that day if you could have heard the 'A's' and the cheers which followed James' [Stuart's] interpretation . . . [of Miss Fletcher's address, which dealt with the Declaration of Independence]

There was no dissention . . . on that Fourth of July, for all the malcontents had gone to Lapwai . . . and when we left the ground to go to our little cabin, we were followed by good wishes and pleasant words.

As the two white women sat on the door step of the shabby little Mission house listening "to the evening hymns and watched the camp fires burn low and go out and the tents disappear in the nightfall," their low talk was of the McBeths, for "how could we but be satisfied with the Kamians, and how could we help travelling, in thought, up the trail to Mt. Idaho to thank the lonely little woman, to whose influence with her red children the right inception of the allotment was so much indebted."²⁶

Then there was Kate left behind in Godless-Lapwai. How she would have cherished being with them here in the Kamiah twilight, reliving the events of an ideal McBeth Fourth! It was sometime before they heard what had actually transpired at the agency. According to Kate, the progressive, Christian Indians in Lapwai had been as disturbed, if not even more than their white friends, over the plans for the holiday. They had formed a committee who went to Agent Norris to protest the *Tal-lik-lykt*, the races, and the gambling. Their protest was futile and their request ignored; the agent brushed them aside saying it was a tremendously interesting show for all the whites for miles around, "as good as a circus." The war-whoops rang out, the

women wailed, and the exploits of the braves were recited as they rode through the government grounds. Most of the whites watching the "circus" had no understanding of the significance these ceremonies held for the Nez Perces, recalling to many of them so recently returned from captivity the glories of the Joseph War, only twelve years away.

"If the white people only knew how we feel," said a man who was a veteran of that last struggle, now a Christian elder, watching Chief Joseph ride by at the head of this Fourth parade. "If they knew what these songs mean to us, there would be no Tal-lik-lykts."

But the man in authority, the agent, did not know, and he was determined to disregard this minority of Christian Nez Perces. His final threat was destined to hush them permanently:

"It is good," said the Agent. "It was fine, and we will have a better procession next year; and if you men interfere with my business I'll put you in Jail, and if your missionary don't stop meddling, I'll put her off the Reservation. She has put you up to this."²⁷

Miss Fletcher and Miss Gay, true to their promise of the past year to the Kamiah Christian Indians, now faced

our problem: given a pile of rough lumber, two kegs of nails, three kegs of paint, a lump of putty, and box of glass, forty rolls of wall paper, a white wash brush, a box of carpenter's tools, a spade, an iron saw, and four pairs of hands already full . . . a fallen-to-pieces church to be made as good as new.

The four pairs of hands belonged to Miss Fletcher, Miss Gay, and their two hired men, Edson Briggs and James Stuart. Because the mercury stood at 110 in the shade, it was decided that the earlier in the morning the work started the better, but

it was not easy to stir the Indians up to the point of actual physical exertion. They would come, a few of them, and lie on the grass and watch Briggs . . . but they could not be persuaded to move themselves.

"When the Surveyor introduced his bulky person under the building to inspect the foundation, they thought it a good joke and lay on the grass and laughed. When James was bidden to tell them they must help,

they laughed some more. When informed that some logs must be brought for a new foundation, they continued to lie on the grass and laugh."

'What do they say?' asked Briggs.

'They do not say anything.'

"Indians lay upon the ground as if time and eternity were at their disposal and life's first duty was to take it easy."

'The old chiefs won't let the church be repaired, because they said you are doing it for Robert; and they hate Robert,' James [Stuart] said.

'Then everything so far has been done by the Williams family?'

'Who belongs to the chiefs' party?'

'All the police and the Agency Indians and Archie Lawyer; he is the worst of all.'

The four pairs of hands finally enlisted in their remodeling those of Felix Corbett, who joined Old Billy [Williams] and rigged up a dray to drag six heavy logs from the Government mill, "where they had lain for years, waiting to be cut by the Government miller into boards." Robert Williams "diligently shaved the shakes (Idaho for shingles) . . . until overcome by the great heat, he fainted at his post." Slowly one by one others joined the busy pseudo-carpenters "until even old Wilson, a staunch Roman Catholic, drove several nails into the Presbyterian edifice."

Miss Gay took as her special project refurbishing the pulpit; she first scraped, then grained it with a high mahogany finish. To match its lustre she painted two chairs and a table that Luke Williams had constructed. "The platform was carpeted in red to harmonize with the plush cushion and the ten Commandments were nicely framed and hung against the wall." One of the greatest puzzles was trying to re-paper the building because even arising at dawn, the workers discovered that

the paste dried upon one end of a length of paper before the other could be covered and was constantly being baked in the bucket . . . the paper loose in the morning, snapped in great rents from top to bottom by noon . . . There was no plaster on the walls, only

cotton tacked to the uprights and this tore away again and again . . . Finally "a trip was taken to Mt. Idaho to buy new and strong cotton and then with a sure foundation, the walls were soon ready for the papering."

James Stuart "spent his leisure time when off duty for three weeks on that belfry . . . each day he found a new beauty to add." Several crucial trips were necessary to Mt. Idaho to secure hammers, to borrow hatchets and jack screws, to report their trials and triumphs to Sue, to the Little Mother. But finally it was all completed — such rejoicing! Of them all, Old Billy Williams was most overwhelmed:

He came in shyly, walked down to the pulpit, put his hand on the Bible, touched the carpeted platform and the table and the chairs, then winking hard, he walked all round the room touching every seat and came at last to the bell.

He rang the bell, and suddenly found himself holding on the rope lifted from the floor going toward Heaven. "Then turning to us, he said, while tears ran from his blinking eyes,

"Now I die happy. God got a good Church house."

The next day Billy disappeared, "but came back with a new broom, which he had ridden to Mt. Idaho, thirty-five miles distant, to buy."²⁸

Nothing could have delighted Sue more than the remodeling of "Robert's church." Even though Silas Whitman was temporarily in control during Robert's suspension, she kept a sharp rein on the Kamiahans. Perhaps it wasn't Sue directly, maybe it was the Measuring Woman, or even her Presbyterian ally, Jane Gay, possibly one of Robert's loyal elders who reported to Dr. Gunn that Silas was

threatening to excommunicate Robert Williams, that you are also threatening the Elders of Kamiah Church if they do not do as you tell them; that you are dividing the Kamiah Church and drawing away Miss McBeth's pupils from her.

As the official responsible in the Presbytery, Dr. Gunn, the stated clerk, wrote sternly to "Rev. Silas Whitman":

It is your duty as pastor to exercise all kindness toward Robert Williams . . . to follow the things which make for

peace in the whole church, and to aid Miss McBeth by encouraging her pupils to remain with, and cooperate with, her in the work of her school.

If you do contrary to this, you will be called to account by the Presbytery.²⁹

The outlanders were appalled and yet strangely fascinated by the crickets, which came in August;

Not the cricket-on-the hearth species, but his fierce, barbarian cousin, the lubber locust. They come in streams, tumbling over all obstructions in their way . . . they do not leave a green thing behind them and . . . 'they will go through a house and clean it out' . . . The Indians dig ditches before them, into which they drop and fight each other . . . We suggested that the river might stop them.

'Land alive, they'll fill up that little river and tumble in upon you by the million . . . '

The ground was literally alive with the creatures; the hoofs of the horses and the tires of the wheels crushed them with a horrible greasy crunching sound. The wheat fields were black with them, two or three at work upon each stalk, which they cut off clean as a patent header and then go down and eat the grain.

Camas Prairie hummed with unusual activity through out the month of September. The Nez Perces and the few discouraged farmers left were trying to salvage the remains of their few pitiful crops. The Measuring Woman was pushing and prodding her crew to complete as much of the survey as possible. Miss Gay wrote that the Indian

may want to do it [completion of the allotment], he may will to do it, but the element of time has not entered into his nebulous calculations . . . he has no clocks or watches to divide time . . . it is always undignified to make haste."³⁰

During this month, Mrs. Felix Corbett, Sarah, died. Felix was one of the outstanding Nez Perces who had helped both the McBeths and the Allotting Party. He had long advocated the white man's way, planting the second orchard in the Kamiah valley. To counteract the Lawyers' claim to the chieftainship, the

McBeths had staunchly maintained that Felix Corbett was the last real Nez Perce chief. His conduct had bolstered their claim for frequently he had taken courageous and dangerous stands: defending Robert, accompanying to safety the Misses Fletcher and Gay at the end of their first year from Kamiah across the frozen November prairie with Sarah and their little boy Paul jogging along on their own ponies. Sarah, one of Kate's "dear women," was herself of firm-minded independence; it was she who had organized the first women's party on the Fourth in Kamiah when the men had deserted them for the Lapwai "goings-on" and had staunchly defended her right to go camas hunting against Felix's demand that her place was at home tending his garden. No minister but an elder of strong convictions, Felix Corbett was a stickler for all the amenities and legalities. He and Sarah had first been united in Christian wedlock by George Waters during the Great Revival of 1870, but "years afterwards [he] took his matronly wife up to Robert and was married — 'for sure' ". Now Sarah was dead and he wanted her "to be buried as white people are" so his white friends helped him secure muslin for the lining of the rough board coffin.³¹

It was almost October when the Surveying party called it a year in the field and returned to Lapwai. Here they found that "Miss Kate had arranged comfortable quarters and the School Superintendent [McConville] ... has given us a kind welcome to his domain." In return for Kate's help and to make her shack more habitable for the coming winter months, Miss Fletcher detailed "four men for two days working on the old house — the gloomy old porch and one partition soon down." Before the women left for the East, Miss Fletcher took "Surveyor Gibs" and marked out a site for the location of Kate's future "Mission farm ... the cottage which Mrs. Ladd so kindly offered to build while [Kate] was in Portland."

In November commemorating her arrival in Lapwai, Kate reflected:

"Five years today since I left Kamiah — I have no desire to go back now."

Kamiah was no longer the paradise the sisters had left because "Archie after all these years of plotting has succeeded today the

congregation is divided with Robert and Archie in that little valley river between them." Mr. Deffenbaugh was in Kamiah for the establishment of the Second Presbyterian Church and at the same time "reinstated Robert five months silent." As the Easterners had predicted, Sue had "set herself to right the wrong" and a few weeks before had sent an affidavit stating that Moses Monteith swore that Alice had falsely accused Robert. Thanksgiving was a "pleasant one for Kate since she was invited to lead "the services in Gov. S. [school] perhaps 100 present. had dinner with the mess . . . I traced the thanksgiving back to Moses."³²

Because of Miss Fletcher's access to influential persons in both government and the church, the McBeths had asked her to take directly to Dr. Ellinwood in Philadelphia "the second church business." She and Miss Gay had connections that extended to many wealthy friends, among them Presbyterian philanthropist, Mrs. Henry K. Thaw of Pittsburgh, who had been left a widow during the past year. It had been her generosity that had supplied the funds for refurbishing the Kamiah Church. To her again Alice Fletcher went with the description of Kate's miserable and inadequate shelter, totally at the mercy of the whim of any unsympathetic government functionary in charge of the agency. In early December, Miss Fletcher reported her attempts to influence the opinion of the church Board in Philadelphia toward the Kamiah Second Church and then concluded with "a bit of news. Mrs. Thaw will build you a house as soon as I secure the land . . . Mrs. Ladd can build the Mission Home on the other ground — that is *for you*."³³

Such luxury was only a dream of the future, so far merely a promise. There wasn't even the land available yet; the long winter months stretched ahead of Kate living in the reality of a drafty, converted root house. Christmas approaching with "nearly 200 children" with two entertainments, "one in church & another here in training school" kept Kate too busy to speculate beyond tomorrow. She managed to send "a box to Roberts church Kamiah to make them a little happy after their year of trials" and guiltily worried over Archie's church "if had a tree . . . or not."

Snowed in at Mt. Idaho, Sue was not writing much to Kate. Last

summer's bitter acrimony over Kate's furlough rankled with both sisters. Their letters to each other were terse and business like, concerned chiefly with Sue's determination to freeze out Archie's church. She demanded that Kate never mention Archie's church in any report, "it isn't a church." Friends who had seen Sue on the prairie reported that she didn't appear very well, that she seldom left her cottage. Kate mused over her sister's state of health and then reassured herself that for years Sue had predicted her own imminent death.

During the winter of 1890-91, it seemed to Kate that Sue was obsessed with the desire "to kill Kamiah Second Church by silence." Kate in the spring months, busy with her own ambitious plans for women's activities, scarcely had time to read her sister's voluminous and exhortatory letters, repetitiously all on the same subject of Archie's church. Sue coached Kate monotonously in the manipulation of figures in sending in reports; there must not be "one word . . . about Archie and Second Kamiah Church." Kate was loaning her magic lantern to Robert's church, but she must be sure it went to "Robert's church only . . . his church is large enough for all." Kate was the chief recipient of these instructions because Sue bent every effort to keep all mention of the Second Church away from the official Board in Philadelphia. Although Presbytery meeting in Lewiston in April, received and enrolled the Second Presbyterian Church of Kamiah, in the middle of the summer Sue was congratulating herself that in the Board Reports she received there was still no mention of such an organization. In her opinion "these Indian preachers, Archie Lawyer and Silas Whitman" had deserted their jobs and should have no pay from the board, no one at Second Kamiah should have any salary supplied by the Presbyterian Church. It was just as well for Sue's mounting blood pressure that western outposts like Mt. Idaho did not receive "The Minutes of the General Assembly." Here Archie Lawyer was listed as pastor elect of the Kamiah Second Presbyterian Church.³⁴

Fortunately, with the long miles between them, Kate was able largely to disregard with her own silence Sue's frantic commands. She eased her conscience by busily planning new activities for the Lapwai Nez Perces. For over a year, Kate had mulled over in her mind, "how can I start a Christian Endeavor

for these young men, no young unmarried women, only five." Early in the beginning of 1891 she succeeded in organizing what she called a YPSCE, Young Peoples' Society of Christian Endeavor, "with thirty-two young men and maidens." Despite this handicap of feminine scarcity, Kate established a membership requirement of attendance each week of at least two prayer meetings. All this she duly reported to Mrs. W.S. Ladd, president of the Women's Northern Pacific Presbyterian Board of Missions, for she was supporting generously the Lapwai group. Mrs. Ladd had also contributed \$500 to the \$1,000 given by the Board toward moving the Spalding church "four miles distant to the site chosen for it," away from the dangers of the raging waters of the springtime Lapwai creek.³⁵

During the past winter doldrums, Kate had invited several of her most dependable women for a day at her cottage, "to cut out undergarments for . . . a few of the poorest old women." These five pupils of hers included two older women, Mrs. Timothy and Mrs. Abraham Brooks, the young widow, Mrs. Susie Reuben, Mrs. Edward Reboin [Mary], and Mrs. John Allen. After a busy happy morning of basting, stitching, measuring, and visiting, at noon as they gathered around Kate's rough board table for lunch, their hostess made her proposal. Could the Nez Perce women not establish a missionary society just like white women? At first they were puzzled and worried too that "the men will make fun of the women officers," but Kate smoothed over their fears, and they agreed to come next prayer-meeting day, Thursday.

The church announcement and invitation brought twenty women to the January meeting to hear the explanation of this revolutionary and exciting adventure. Kate "nominated" the officers: Mrs. Reuben, president; Mrs. Timothy, treasurer; Kate, secretary. They decided that most of all their church needed seats "instead of those old school desks." In addition to being a missionary society they would also "be partly an aid society, for our church was poor." There were to be no regular membership fees, but at each monthly meeting the women were to bring a "free-will offering in money, or gloves, moccasins, Indian baskets or whatever . . ."

February was a blustery wintry day with snow filling the air. As

Kate scurried around with last minute details of preparation, worrying that no one might appear in such an unpromising weather, she kept her eye on the window. And there first of all came Nancy Lindsley, the proper minister's wife, riding "around to the back of the house to hitch her pony, with an air of 'I am not afraid of the men.'" Protecting her "new head headkerchief" she held firmly against the swirling snow her "light buff sunshade with its deep border of lace." All the way from Cottonwood up on the Camas Prairie arrived Mrs. John Allen and a friend, chilled and covered with snow. Two young girls from the government school "wrote their names in the big book." The original five organizers with Harriet [Mrs. James Stuart] helped pack the women into the small room. "The woman in the red blanket from old Jacob's tent slid down to the floor, where she felt more at home . . . Helen . . . with her two babies . . . [also] preferred the floor." Old blind Jane, "one of Mrs. Spalding's pupils," was given the place of honor, Kate's one rocking chair. At the conclusion of the afternoon, Kate was amazed that from their nickels and dimes, "Mrs. Timothy folded up in her handkerchief, nine dollars in silver." And then there were the gloves and moccasins that after three months' accumulation were sent to Washington, Pennsylvania, to be sold. The new seats for the church were coming nearer to reality.³⁶

Although the reservation had been expecting the return of the Measuring Woman and The Cook since March, they were not back until April. At Lapwai they exchanged with Kate the news of the past winter and shared her joy in her new missionary society.

How does Miss Kate do it? we ask each other. "How does she succeed in developing the [blossom] of Christian graces in soil where others find only noxious weeds of barbarism? Why do cleanliness and thrift and unselfish endeavor grow up under the weak hand of an unsupported woman rather than from beneath the strong arm of official guidance?"

The expedition's official photographer had "become quite chummy with Miss Kate. She seems to have . . . called out the best that is in him. He has been busy lately taking pictures of her Nez Perce women's industrial society, and he tells us, with more enthusiasm that we supposed he could be capable of, that these

few women, with the work of their own unaided hands, have earned money enough to refit the Lapwai Church with new seats tastefully painted and put in place, and have also fenced in the two tribal graveyards which, until now, had been roamed over by the Reservation cattle."³⁷

Now no strangers to the reservation and its problems, many of which they shared with the McBeths, such as housing and lack of cooperation, Misses Fletcher and Gay also shared many of the McBeths' convictions. Besides their insistence on the strict observance of the Sabbath, the four women agreed on the strict interpretation of the Seventh Commandment and its direct bearing upon the rights and status of women. Sue had told them that monogamy was to most Nez Perces "a white man's new fangled idea." At the same time, the Indian woman "owns her children, her horses, her tepee and all its belongings," and exerted a great independence in tribal matters. Kate may have never realized that she was as partisan toward women in her work, as Sue was toward the men. Sitting in the dusk again in front of Kate's "root house," Kate agreed with Jane Gay's conclusion that the Nez Perce women "are more amenable to reason than the men; they grasp a new idea more quickly and hold it more tenaciously and when they make an appointment they generally keep it."

The status of women in marriage was central in Miss Fletcher's allotment plan for to weed out imposters she undertook to trace the geneology of all claimants. Squaw men, living with Indian women and their children, could claim vast holdings if the relationship were made legal. Thus it was with no little amusement and satisfaction that Miss Gay relates:

we met a wagon load of children with a white man and an Indian woman on the seat in front. We took no special notice of the rather unusual circumstance, but when we passed a second and a third wagon, we said, 'There must be a circus in Lewiston.'

And then it came out that [Miss Fletcher] had let it be known that when white men came to have their children allotted it would be well to bring a marriage certificate with their application, and these wagon loads were going to Lewiston for that certificate. Why the children

were taken did not appear but evidently through some idea that their presence might be necessary to the performance of the ceremony which was to furnish the certificate.

The men bowed cordially and ... [we] beamed approvingly upon them and the women smiled and the children looked as if they were, indeed, going to a circus. [The Men] had no use for a marriage certificate, but they were willing to accommodate ... at so trifling expense.³⁸

By one direct official edict from her position of authority, the Measuring Woman had accomplished more for the status of the Nez Perce woman than the pleading moral leadership of all the Christian missionaries in more than half a century. But when the Misses Fletcher and Gay witnessed at first hand their first Lapwai Fourth celebration all the horrors the McBeths had related were verified, and no complacency remained about the status of Nez Perce women. Miss Gay wrote of their 1891 Fourth:

The Fourth of July has come and gone and we still live ... we slept a whole week of nights with our pistol under our pillows and a man with the Cook's gun in the kitchen.

A true New England patriot, Jane Gay was especially indignant to "think of having to defend one's self against the Fourth of July! but that is just what we had to do; We! born under the shadow of Bunker Hill Monument and inoculated with Massachusetts' blood!" It was this Fourth of July that the President of the United States was signing the proclamation that created the State of Idaho.

The Nez Perce observance of the Fourth of July is rather peculiar. An ancient ceremony of theirs occurred at about this season, one of the leading features of which was a general exchange of wives. In the course of time, as the tribe took on civilization, horse-racing and gambling were added to the program, together with the absorption of our national beverage; but the old leading feature was not expunged; it was simply modified in its observance to meet the approval of the Hudson Bay Company . . .

In utter ignorance of the true nature of the Indian 'celebration' the officials here have suffered their war processions to go on, in which naked men ride and wailing women follow, reviving old time scenes and exciting the Indians almost to frenzy.

All this by day; at night — well, we will let darkness cover the night. The girls' dormitories at this school [government] were regularly raided, and general license prevailed among the tents of the Indian camp just outside the school enclosure.

Now more than ever the two Eastern women agreed with the McBeths that Kamiah was "like a haven of rest and peace" in contrast to the agency surroundings, where "our dust-choked lungs labor in the vitiated moral atmosphere of Lapwai." To gain relief from the memories of their nightmarish Fourth, one afternoon Miss Gay went exploring below Lapwai. Where the creek emptied into the Clearwater her keen eye spotted a notable relic," a stone lying half hidden in the grass. It was round, with a square hole in the centre out of which a little plant was growing." When she saw Kate later that evening and inquired of her:

"How in the world did ever a millstone get dropped on that swampy, overgrown point down by the mouth of the creek?"

"Why can't you guess?" Kate readily answered. "You've stumbled across the site of Henry Harmon Spalding's old mill; that must be the first mill stone ever used to grind grain in Idaho."³⁹

Each summer the three women, Alice Fletcher, Jane Gay, and Kate McBeth came to know each other more intimately, to discover new aspects of their characters. Kate summarized her judgment of Miss Fletcher:

I have always admired Miss F. but had never seen her strong character so tested before or her ability to check mate wily Indian politicians. It is said she receives a Congressman's salary — she earns it. She meets the old Medicine Men in Councils who have tried to kill her with a look. She knows no fear and so fully understands Indian character. She cannot be taken by surprise & withal she is very lovable . . . Our work is one — citizen-

ship & religion.⁴⁰

On her part, Miss Gay came to appreciate Kate's tenderness and care for all needy creatures, animals as well as people. Sue was far too unwell to travel at all now, so in August Kate devoted her few weeks of freedom to her ailing sister in Mt. Idaho. Before she left, Kate said to the Measuring Woman and The Cook:

"Here I have thirteen hens and a host of little animated puff balls, their chicks, so cute and lovable. But how can I ever care for so many during the winter? While I'm away with Sue do please kill and eat some of the older hens, for like these chicks, I've cared for, brought each one of them up just like members of my family. I cannot bear to eat them myself. It would really be a favor to me."

In their leisurely conversational evenings Kate learned much about Miss Fletcher's life work in anthropology. With the aid of Uncle Billy and blind old Abraham Brooks, Kate helped gather and translate legends and stories about the misty past of the Nez Perces. Because Miss Fletcher was considered "one of the most authoritative interpreters of the North American Indian . . . his soul-life, his religious and social concepts," she was to present a paper at the Chicago Anthropological Congress in 1893. Toward the end of her Idaho sojourn, she was busy gathering material for this Chicago speech. "Old Billy Williams" made a map "to show the location of various Nez Perce lands and villages, the water course and trails," which ultimately reached the Smithsonian Institute in Washington, D.C. Gradually Kate came to realize that "she had had, in the Nez Perce tribe, unsuspected opportunities of increasing the world's knowledge." As congenial as the four women grew to be in general outlook, the better educated two from the East held some reservations about the McBeths' insistence on completely transforming the Nez Perce way of life. Less rigid by nature than Sue and more exposed to the thinking of the noted anthropologist, Kate wondered at times if it had always been wise to insist that their Nez Perce converts "should prove their sincerity by altering their habits and customs, good and bad, to conform to the ideas and practices of another race." Driven by Sue's insistence, Kate "like the great majority of missionaries had bent her energies to the obliteration of old customs and beliefs, classing them as heathen. She [began] to see

that there is more in the old Indian philosophy than she ever dreamed of and that there might have been something of value saved if she had known how."⁴¹

Practically all this third summer, the Allotting team worked near the agency at Lapwai and associated even more than usual with Kate. The three women "were all invited to Felix's wedding [Corbett] . . . we had assisted at the burial of his former wife [Sarah, September, 1890] and he was anxious to have our approbation of this, his second choice." Felix' second choice was Mrs. Susie Reuben, one of Kate's founding members of her missionary group, in fact the first president. Susie was a sister of Chief Joseph, "a comely and wise woman who will be a true help-meet." With "the mercury . . . at 115" they listened to the marriage ceremony, when according to their interpreter, James Stuart, "Felix promised not to strike with his hand or his foot, and she, not to strike with her tongue."

Before the Misses Fletcher and Gay left for the cooler Camas Prairie to continue their work, every one was "in a state of excitement . . . rejoicing over a bit of good news which came from the outside to us." It was the confirmation "if a site could be secured, Miss Kate is to have a lovely little cottage built for her." Miss Gay describes Kate's reaction:

As for Miss Kate, she is a self-contained Scotch woman, but the first great wave of our enthusiasm took her somewhat off her poise. Her face flushed and her eyes grew moist and I believe that, for one moment, she felt that this wonderful thing might come to pass. Then the burden of her whole Reservation life pressed down upon her and she said, 'It cannot be! It will not be allowed!'

The Allotting Party "left in Lapwai, on the fifteenth of September, an atmosphere quivering with heat, but when the next day we made our camp on the uplands, we were so cold . . . ice forming in the camp buckets, and the wind would not let us live in peace." Among their crew was Mark Arthur, one of Sue's pupils who "says his prayers every night." He earned distinction by not only owning a night shirt but actually wearing it. This nonconformity was more than his companions could tolerate, so it mysteriously disappeared. Mark, "a muscular Christian . . .

threatened to thrash the whole lot of them" if it wasn't returned, and it just as mysteriously reappeared. Again the group visited Sue at Mt. Idaho and then moved on to the junction of the road to Kamiah, which led to Pierce City. Because their camp was located near a common "camping ground for travelers to the mines," frequently they encountered some of the McBeths' Christian Nez Perces, who were

on their way to Pierce City with . . . provisions for the miners. There would be women and children . . . each with some part of the work to do. We always like to lie still while the stars are fading above our tent and listen to the tones of the Father's prayer, wafted to us on the breeze of the dawn: and the queer twisted hymn of our Kamian friends which we could hardly recognize as 'Awake my soul and with the Sun.'

Sometimes "while the packs were being roped on the ponies," the two women would find that their neighbors during the night had been "old Joshua's wife, or Paul [Whitfield?], or Silas [Whitman], old Solomon [Whitman] or Felix [Corbett]." ⁴²

Of the twelve Thanksgivings she'd spent in Idaho, this 1891 celebration was the best of all for Kate. The day started off by Mr. McConville inviting her to "conduct services" in the government school as she had the year before. When she returned to her cottage, she found it crowded with Nez Perce friends, among them Elder John Allen and his wife from Cottonwood, the Solomon Whitmans from Kamiah. After presiding over her own Thanksgiving feast, Kate, with "a lovely loaf of bread" under her arm, walked over to Miss Fletcher's for a second dinner. This was "a sure enough Thanksgiving dinner," a farewell party, prepared by "the Chinaman who presided over the school kitchen" who had "steamed his turkeys two hours and then baked them another." Another guest was Edson Briggs, the transplanted Vermonter. Kate and Sue, by letters of detailed instructions, had been occupied the last few weeks making plans for a group of the Nez Perce youths to accompany the travelers East. The older women were to chaperone and deliver the Nez Perces to the Carlisle Indian School in far off Pennsylvania. Last minute arrangements were worked out after dinner as the group of whites sat among the loaded carpet bags and luggage.

Miss Gay was to remain in Chicago with her ill sister while Miss Fletcher proceeded East. She planned to stop in Pittsburgh to visit Mrs. Thaw, to relay first hand Kate's gratitude for the promised new house. In Washington, D.C., Special Agent Fletcher had an appointment with the Commissioner of the Indian Bureau to give a report on the progress of the Nez Perce Allotment. She definitely intended to include information of the Reservation about which the McBeths had coached her, but which they would never again dare commit to a letter. There were many details about the personnel at the agency that the business-like and respected Miss Fletcher could give in conversation with great effectiveness. She had her plans all "laid to get Robbins out . . . we will be able to get the church site I think." Kate heard from Miss Fletcher in Chicago that all had gone well:

Miss Gay and the children together with myself reached here safely on Monday. We sent the children on to Carlisle where they arrived Tuesday. They were well and happy every moment of the time.⁴³

Snow piling up on the prairie buried Mt. Idaho into another hard winter of isolation, 1891-1892. But nothing could isolate Sue's inborn urge to dictate policies to everyone about every detail. She had finished her mind that next year Miss Fletcher must take Robert to the Anthropological Congress in Chicago, the perfect exhibit of the Nez Perce tribe. Characteristically she was already writing numerous letters to open the paths that would lead to this one logical choice. Accompanying her plans were her worries because the elders of Robert's church had solemnly warned her that

if one more woman would 'tamipak' against Robert it would kill him forever . . . silence and get him out of their way so they could gain his church too . . . And, you may be sure they are leaving no means untried to get one woman to 'tamipak,' and if they know of his being chosen for the Exposition, it will make them work the harder to kill him, i.e. get him out of the way for that too.

Although Sue grudgingly admitted that Kate's influence had become greater over Robert now, she orders Kate "not to interfere in any way" with him because "he must not be 'bossed'

by a woman."⁴⁴

More immediate and pressing than the '93 Chicago Exposition, still more than a year away, were the exciting plans for the meeting of the General Assembly of the Presbyterian Church in Portland, the first time in the far Northwest. This gathering called attention to the growing importance of the Pacific coastal region, of its transportation difficulties and facilities, and it brought those at the heart of eastern Presbyterianism into closer sympathy with Indian missions. All over the nation, Presbyterians were anticipating the opportunity of seeing the romantic Far West; in Presbytery after Presbytery, clerical politicians jockeyed to be the fortunate delegates. Several eastern delegates wrote letters of inquiry to the McBeths for directions to reach the Nez Perce Mission for a visit after the Portland meeting.

The McBeths were in the backwaters of the preparations at the level of their Presbytery, Walla Walla, meeting at Waitsburg, where plans for Portland were to be made. One of their chief anxieties was a scourge of "la grippe" that swept over the reservation and surrounding neighborhood of Lewiston in February, laying many low, bringing death as usual to the old and feeble Nez Percés. But the McBeths rallied and escaped the worst effects with prayerful thanksgiving to their God. For these two momentous events, Presbytery and General Assembly, Kate ordered material for a new dress through her niece Maizie Crawford back home in Ohio. By accident it was delivered at Mt. Idaho to Sue, whose Scotch thrift was offended by Kate's extravagance and who sharply "wondered at the color." Since those far-away, now almost dream-like days of St. Louis, when Eben had cared about her appearance, Sue hardly gave a thought to her clothes — just anything to cover her decently: severe black, down to the floor, high necked, long-sleeved. But she was concerned about the difficulties of traveling to Waitsburg early in April from Mt. Idaho, still deep in winter ruts. It was an exhausting long trip for her frail constitution, and the unaccustomed hardships Sue dreaded. There was also the crucial decision between "boat and cars" or "stage and cars" or all the way with horses, because "the horse is almost as much expense as the person." Her arrangements were complicated by the stage and mail routes being changed. The old Waha route

was to be replaced by a new one passing by the Spring ranch.⁴⁵

Because "Presbytery and going to presbytery . . . and seeing were such an education", the McBeths had always encouraged as many Nez Perces as possible to attend. It was a long standing custom that for this particular event the Indians "did not need to ask for a permit from the Agent" to leave the Reservation. "Often several more than the appointed delegates would ride out on their little Cayuse ponies into the great world beyond . . . The happy party would carry the tent and provisions for not only the way, but for camping while there." In the earlier Walla Walla Presbytery meetings there had been "only three or four white ministers, looking all the whiter because of the dark Nez Perces background, as many as twelve or fourteen native ministers and elders, who . . . came on their ponies no matter what condition the roads were in." But this year Waitsburg was different; for the first time "the Waitsburg people . . . opened their doors to entertain the Nez Perces" and "how they did enjoy their first ride on a steamboat on the Snake River!" During their deliberations, the Presbytery of Walla Walla took under its care "Mr. Harry Hayes, a student from Miss S.L. McBeth's theological training school as candidate for the gospel ministry."⁴⁶

Both McBeth sisters were in Waitsburg, but the experience proved too much for Sue's waning strength. Even she recognized that despite her "strong Scotch will," her body was not up to the exertions and excitement of attending the huge General Assembly in May. The realization was especially bitter because months before Mrs. Ladd had invited the sisters to be her guests in her sumptuous Portland home. Disappointed but undaunted, Sue busied herself over arrangements to send her "schollars" to the approaching General Assembly. Robert Williams would be taken care of first; he would go in her place on the money the Board had allotted for her expenses. At Waitsburg Sue had successfully manoeuvred to have the Eastern Oregon Presbytery pay the expenses of Robert's son-in-the-Lord, James Hayes, so they would have each other for company. Now she proposed that she pay some of the expense for Robert Parson, hoping that Kate would make up any deficit. But whatever Kate does, she must "*not hint one word to anyone (save Robert Williams as a secret) about my paying Robert Parson's expenses. Remember*

— or it will make trouble . . . I will not pick out 2 or 3 and send the rest. I love them all."⁴⁷

All decked out in her unaccustomed finery to depart for Portland, Kate with "the Indian elder E.J. Connor from Lapwai" participated in communion at the First Presbyterian Church in Lewiston with twenty-one members of the congregation. One of the leaders in the Lewiston church was "Charlie" Monteith, Kate's old Lapwai adversary, but even his cold, formal nod could not dampen Kate's excitement over the coming trip. Fortified with the new dress, the unfashionable Kate set out alone to do the honors for the McBeth sisters in the wealthy Ladd home. Those ten days in Portland were as near a gala event as Kate ever experienced in her hard-working school-teaching life. The luxurious hospitality and solicitude of the Ladds, such as she'd never known; her complete independence from Sue's domination and unspoken disapproval of any spontaneous levity; the respectful hovering attention of the Nez Perces dependent upon her guidance and help in this strange white man's world; the notables from the East, who spoke glowingly of her sacrifices and "her noble Red Men," hers for the first time, not Sue's; the awed and respectful attention given to her every word about Indians; the blessed reunions with some few old friends from home.

Most proud was she to escort Sue's ministers, licentiates, and some of her own students, to introduce them to the eastern dignitaries of the church. With their innate dignity, which "forbade their showing surprise at anything they saw," the Nez Perces conducted themselves with poise and solemnity. Whenever they were given the opportunity to speak to this august body, their stumbling but graphic English enchanted the audience with their simplicity and yet profound piety. On their part, the Indian pastors and elders gained a greater respect for the size, workings, and importance of their denomination and an appreciation of the wider world scope of Presbyterianism beyond the Clearwater valley.⁴⁸

It was a novel experience for Kate to be the one returning from the outside world to be welcomed at Lapwai by the Misses Fletcher and Gay, who were waiting to greet her. Three years ago when they had arrived in Lewiston Miss Fletcher had told THE

TELLER "The whole of this work can be accomplished and the allotments made within the period of fifteen months." But it had taken four transcontinental round-trips and twenty-two months of hard field work extending over the better part of four years. Now Head Surveyor Briggs was telling the same paper that he estimated it would be finished within two more months. The returning women found that during their last absence two innovations had moved into northern Idaho, at least into the radius of the reservation: in Lewiston the first telephone was listed for The Owl Drug Store in March, and in May electricity was turned on for the first time in the city. But such advances did not melt the deep snows still in the mountains, lessen the heavy rains in the valleys, or eliminate the hordes of grasshoppers that swarmed over the prairie, all hindrances to the conclusion of Miss Fletcher's work. For Memorial Day, Lewiston welcomed "Capt. Ed McConville of Lapwai Indian Schools [who] will have the school band in helping celebrate," a great change since its first appearance two years ago at the Spalding burial ground.⁴⁹

Now fully aware from their own experience what the coming Fourth portended for Lapwai, the Misses Fletcher and Gay could no longer remain disinterested on-lookers. Miss Gay was not at all surprised to see a group of the Christian elders in earnest conference. In fact, it was no accident that she managed to "stumble upon this little troubled party in their deliberations and they told her their perplexity and longing for help. They dare not go to their faithful missionary for fear of bringing her into trouble . . . We had been weighed and tested and tried by Indian logic and Indian intuition." The elders and leaders in the church might be defeated and bewildered, but not Jane Gay. Usually willing to follow modestly the driving force of Miss Fletcher, as Kate generally did of Sue, Miss Gay now found herself pushed into a position of necessary decisive action. She met with the men, helped them write a clear and convincing letter, had them address it to the Important Person in Washington, "the good Commissioner Thomas J. Morgan," whom she knew, saw that the Nez Perce Superintendent of Sunday School [Peter Lindsley?] signed it, and that it was safely put in the mail.

With full scale preparations excitedly underway for the great day, only one week before the Fourth, a telegram from

Washington arrived at the Lapwai Agency, "like a bursting of a bomb shell"

the tewats, the sorcerers of the tribe, rode past the cabin of the missionary, crying out ' Now you must go! Agent says now you must go!' The innocent woman got the blame.

With gratification Jane Gay closes the account with the correct prophecy that "thus a great step has been taken in the right direction. Henceforth there will be two parties in the tribe and a spirited fight will go on." An additional hopeful note was that in nearby Genesee this same Fourth, "James Reuben, the leading Indian orator of America, was the principal speaker."⁵⁰

During the last four months of the summer of 1892 that she spent with the Nez Perces and the McBeths, besides "closing up this allotment," Miss Fletcher found two chief worries among the Indians. First, James Stuart reported that the agent was spreading the rumor that all the allotment was to be done over again as soon as Miss Fletcher departed.

"Agent frighten people much. I tell Indians say nothing till The Woman come."

Already dreading the final departure of this just Special Agent, James concluded:

"Indians all say when they see the back of your head things go straight — when you go out of sight, much trouble; everybody have sore heart."

The second anxiety was the Nez Perces' desire for citizenship. Especially those returned students who had been away to school at Cottage Grove and Carlisle resented the requirement that they must wait twenty-five years, until they were old men, to become American citizens.

September 12 "was not an easy day for" the Measuring Woman and the Cook because "we were taking our last look at our red friends" and the two McBeths. Because of Sue's deteriorating health, they knew it was likely they would never see her again. The Nez Perces had decided that these two women from the government had genuine concern for their welfare and had tried to better their living arrangements. True to their tribal generosity, the Nez Perces came to the agency, bringing many handsome gifts of gratitude and farewell. "James' [Stuart]

grandmother came . . . over the snow mountains all the way from Kamiah to bid us good bye and to bring us the parting gift of a tanned coyote skin, all she possessed in this world that she could give as an expression of her love for the stranger." There was John Allen, "who, when we first arrived four years ago, refused to speak to us . . . turned from our friendly advances with a noble scorn," but now here he was with a gift of a beautiful cougar skin, begging to take our hand . . . with confidence . . . in our good will towards himself in particular and towards his tribe in general." Most gratifying to Miss Fletcher was the arrival of "Utzen Mallican, the old chief, one of the leading obstructionists." Although he had never committed "an overt act" against her as far as she knew, Miss Fletcher was well aware that he had "entertained a lively animosity." When he came to say good-bye at Lapwai, "with a serene smile on his rugged features . . . he strove to make us understand how changed a man he was . . . 'What if I had died hating the 'Measuring Woman.' "51

The gift bringing necessitated returning gifts. Their two horses, Dick and Jimmy, were transferred to their faithful interpreter, James Stuart, "whose affection for them would ensure their good treatment." To blind old Abraham Brooks, they gave the wagon, so "his wife could now take him to his church sometimes and to see Miss Kate, to the comfort of his old age." John Allen's gift took them completely by surprise and they were troubled how to return his kindness. But again Kate, "the gentle missionary" for the last time came to their rescue. Miss Fletcher had hoped to leave Kate's house a little better furnished with a second rocking chair but Kate solved their dilemma by suggesting,

"John would be delighted to have the rocking chair you gave me."

But of all the gift giving and receiving the most significant of all was "The pipe of war and council, which has been used in all the tribal deliberations for over thirty years, the one which was gravely given to Miss Fletcher, with due ceremonial and impressive statement that she had destroyed its significance, because they were no longer a tribe, but citizens of the United States."⁵²

For many years after they left the reservation, Miss Fletcher

and Miss Gay often corresponded with Kate. As they were preparing to leave that last time in 1892, Kate asked when they might return. Miss Fletcher shook her head replying, "No, I cannot come back to visit you, the people would want all their allotments changed at the sight of my face."

So now the allotment was finished, and yet never quite finished in the lives of that generation of the Nez Perces or that of Kate. Years later Kate wrote, proving how accurately Miss Fletcher had known the Indians:

Dear Miss Fletcher is still a comfort to us . . . Let any trouble about a corner-stone or a line fence, spring up, then they come asking, 'Is Miss Fletcher still in Washington? Won't you tell her this or that and ask her to go to the Office about it?' And how often she has helped us.⁵³



Fig. 19 First Presbyterian church at Spalding. Behind it appears to be an earlier church building.



Fig. 20 First Presbyterian church at Kamiah, as repaired by Alice Fletcher and Mrs. Thaw.



Fig. 21 The first Presbyterian church at Kamiah after more recent remodeling.



Fig. 22 Billy Williams (photo by Jane Gay).



Fig. 23 Walla Walla Presbytery about 1891. Left to right, back row: Elder Thomas Moore, Lapwai; Elder Bartholomew Moody, Meadow Creek; Rev. James Hines, North Fork; Rev. Sample; Rev. A. Adair; Elder ———, Waitsburg; Dr. Gunn, Synodical Missionary; Elder ———; Rev. Archie Lawyer; Rev. Peter Lindsley. Left to right, middle row: Elder Jason Conditt; student Harry Hays; Kate C. McBeth; Mrs. Allen, Kendrick; Rev. Allen; Rev. Belden, Kansas City; Rev. Woods. Left to right, front row: Peter Wallace; Joe Peterson, North Fork; Licentiate Kenneth McAtee; Rev. Robert Parsons, Meadow Creek; Rev. Silas Whitman; Rev. Robert Williams.



Fig. 24 Sue McBeth's home at Mt. Idaho where she moved in 1884 (Morrills).



Fig. 25 Mt. Idaho (Morrills).



Fig. 26 Allotting land to the Nez Perces. Alice Fletcher at left, standing with William Caldwell and Abraham Brooks (with cane), known as "Blind Abraham" who was one of Howard's scouts. He was wounded pursuing the hostiles on the Lolo Trail. Edson Briggs holding the surveying rod. (Photo by Jane Gay).



Fig. 27 . The first council to discuss the allotment at the First Presbyterian church at Kamiah. Alice Fletcher at left. (Photo by Jane Gay).



Fig. 28 James Stewart and Alice Fletcher at the surveyors camp at Cold Spring (photo by Jane Gay).



Fig. 29 Surveyors camp at Craig's Mountain (photo by Jane Gay).



Fig. 30 Surveyors (Joe Briggs, Jas. Stewart, and Alice Fletcher) at Camp Bearing Tree (photo by Jane Gay).



Fig. 31 Miss Kate McBeth at the Synod at Vancouver, October 1913. "Aunt Kate always said she was too ugly to have her picture taken and wouldn't sit for it, but one time when she was at Synod a reporter snapped this one and it is the best we have." Katherine Lowrie.



Fig. 32 Kitchen and dining room at Miss McBeth's camp at Talmaks about 1913 or 1914. The two girls on either side of the bearded man in the upper group are Mary Crawford (left) and Elizabeth Crawford. Kate McBeth sitting at the door with cane.



Fig. 33 Together in peace at last. The graves of Kate and Sue McBeth at Kamiah. The grave of the faithful Robert Williams at the right.

CHAPTER 15

OH HOW CHANGED

When the Misses Fletcher and Gay had finally departed, reservation life simmered back to the dull routine of political manoeuvring among the Nez Perce ministers or with the agency officials. In their difficulties with representatives of the government, the McBeths took comfort in reading that President Harrison was "an ardent Presbyterian."¹ Realizing that Sue's health must indeed be seriously failing to prevent her attendance at General Assembly, the Portland minister's widow, Mrs. Aaron L. Lindsley, in the fall wrote to Wooster College in Ohio, suggesting that Sue be given an honorary degree. There is no record of a reply from Wooster and Sue may never have known of the request.

Kate found it especially difficult to readjust to the every day humdrum existence after the exhilaration of her Portland experience and her association with Alice Fletcher and Jane Gay. One of the indirect results of Kate's friendship with the two women was her realization of the potentiality of direct action in the world of politics. Both the sisters had been impressed by the prompt action the eastern women had secured from the Commissioner in Washington against the worst elements of the Fourth celebration. Naturally a Special Agent could go over the head of the local agent by means that were neither possible, ethical, nor politic for the McBeths. Kate, who was too prone to accept disappointments and set-backs all as God's Will, as personal chastisement from Him, was astounded to see what could be accomplished by self assertiveness. The good ministers on the Presbyterian Board of Foreign Missions wielded a respectable lobby in Washington, as Charles Monteith had suspected, and as he certainly learned to his dismay in the Nine Pipes Affair. But "certain church influence" could produce nothing to equal the rapid results that Miss Gay and Miss

Fletcher secured to protect the innocence of the dormitory Indian girls from the ravages of the Fourth of July.

Nor did the aid of the Measuring Woman stop here. She and her associate had wealthy friends in the East to whom they appealed to aid the McBeth Mission, to give modest but crucial amounts for housing and for specific projects. Besides Mrs. Thaw in Pittsburgh, there were the four women with Chicago connections, the Axtells and Rumseys related by marriage. All of them fanned out through their various churches, publications, and business connections seeking help for the McBeth Nez Perce Mission.

Kate had profited much more directly from the Fletcher-Gay associations than had Sue, cloistered away in Mt. Idaho. Sue, in setting herself apart from the petty interferences of the agent, had also deprived herself of many of the small joyous occurrences that gave life a bit of variety on the frontier. Of major affairs, Sue was still the mistress. Of her influence over her students, Kate wrote:

No journey was ever undertaken, not even from Kamiah to Lapwai, or Mount Idaho to Kamiah, without kneeling beside this mother to ask the Father's care. Little notes came back to her if detained, and then as soon as possible after their return they reported to her. How they trusted her! "Why," one of them said . . . "she never deceived us once! Let us keep her teaching in our hearts and follow close after her." But it was in her school room the last winter of her life that this strong bond between teacher and taught, mother and sons, was seen. How anxiously they would scan her face. In a moment one of these gentlemanly pupils was at her side to help her to the chair, which another would place where she loved to sit. With her far-reaching eye and fast-failing strength she was fortifying them against the skepticism which they would meet in the near future. They must not be taken unawares. She never grew weary of the Lord's work. Often did she say in that last winter, "If I were able and younger, I would like nothing better than to go into a wild tribe and do over again the work I have done here."²

By the generosity of the Ladds of Portland and the Rumseys of Chicago, who provided the money to build skeleton box houses for Sue's students in Mt. Idaho, the "New Carlisle" was in a modest way realized. Through the winter months students and their families lived there and learned from her. At planting and harvest time, they went to their fields in Kamiah.

Kate always maintained that Sue's heart was in Kamiah, and surely Sue never once relinquished her grip on affairs there. Robert Williams continued as minister under the constant harrassment of the Lawyers, who represented, even though they were unquestionably Christian, the power and influence of the old chieftanship traditions.

As long as they lived, whenever life became boring to the Lawyers or whenever they felt they had been snubbed by the Williams-McBeth faction, they concocted more deviltry against Robert. Usually they connived to have a woman bring charges against him for making "improper" advances. Every time such a charge was brought, Sue marshalled all her forces in defense. It was all the more difficult because Sue herself had taught the Lawyers the workings of Presbytery, and Archie as a minister could bring any charge before that body. Toward the end of Robert's life so many different accusations had been made that various authorities suspected there might be truth in some of them. In spite of themselves they could not resist wondering "where there is so much smoke . . ." But in this, Kate and Sue agreed emphatically that Robert was being maligned, that these indictments were the work of the devil in the guise of the Lawyer brothers.

By 1890, the cleavage in Kamiah between the Lawyers and the Williamses had come to a climax of animosity. Level-headed members of Presbytery felt that inasmuch as there now were several Nez Perces ordained clergymen, thanks to Sue's school of theology, it would be wise to separate these warring Christians of Kamiah; they were too far apart to work amiably together in one church. That is why Second Presbyterian Church of Kamiah was erected on the south side of the Clearwater and Archie Lawyer undertook to minister to his flock.

Sue was not as graceful a loser as Kate had been when she had been summarily transferred against her wishes from Kamiah to

Lapwai. Sue saw all too clearly the implications for the future in this division of Presbyterians in Kamiah and in the Nez Perces tribe. The tribe numbered approximately 2,000, and considering heathen, Catholics, and Methodists, there were too few at best for the flock of her preachers. Sue, who through the Board of Foreign Missions had the distribution of funds to native preachers, made the edict that until Archie went to the Spokanes, where the Board had assigned him, he was not to receive a salary. But Archie was so gratified to be the leader of a congregation, that this did not at all deter his zeal in ministering to the Kamiah Second Church. On the contrary, it was another successful challenge to the Williams' clique. Despite all the carefully planned opposition, on November 3, 1892, the Reverend Archie Lawyer received 119 members into the Second Kamiah Presbyterian Church. Almost fifty years later Maizie Crawford wrote it "broke my aunt Sue's heart and she almost gave her life to outwit them."³

The year 1892 had been a hard one for Sue. The winter brought an unusual amount of snow and cold to Idaho with another accompanying severe occurrence of "la grippe." Her "Boys" had often found it impossible to come from Kamiah with its comparatively warm temperatures up to the higher altitude of cold and deep snow at Mt. Idaho. The stages with the mail, the only contact with the outside world, were often delayed for weeks. Concerned about Sue's obvious physical deterioration, her students aided her in every way they could as she determinedly continued her teaching. Now Sue appreciated Kate's presence in Idaho, for her sister performed many errands and left her Lapwai responsibilities to spend three of the most severe winter months in Mt. Idaho.

The sisters' earlier relationship was renewed during Sue's last months. Kate's family loyalty to Sue prompted her to take drastic action about the record she had kept all these years in her JOURNAL. A month before Sue's death, Kate tried to erase passages complaining about her sister, and discovering the slow and incomplete she shattered the diary with a more decisive device:

I have been looking over and cutting out of this book words that ought not to have been written, however

true. Oh how changed My dear Sister in Mt. Idaho so sick, dropsy, and longing for me to come again . . . how lonely, how patient in suffering and how I long to be with her. Lord love and keep her and us all.⁴

Sue's life had not been easy. Her body was tiny and fragile, and now crippled badly, but it was ruled by a tremendous intellect and an amazing will. Broken emotionally and physically when Sue came to the Nez Perces in 1873, she did not expect the Lord to grant her much time for service; she least of all would have expected to have twenty years in Idaho. Now by the spring of 1893, her heart was failing from the extreme effort of moving about. Her death came on May 26 when after extreme suffering she went dauntlessly to the reward which she felt she so certainly deserved.

Sue's death was a loss to her Nez Perces students and to her many Indian friends in Kamiah. Kate returned for the last sad weeks; then with Sue's two Mt. Idaho friends, Mrs. L.P. Brown and Mrs. Wallace Scott, she made the long hard trip down the grade to Kamiah. The two "hacks

reached the ferry at sunset Saturday evening, and were met there by a company of sorrowing Nez Perces, who came one by one, gave me a hand, and passed on — in silence. We crossed the river and found another company awaiting us at her old home. We at once placed her body on the platform of the pulpit, where it remained through the tender, touching services of the Sabbath . . . "

Because one of Sue's rigid tenets had been not "to bury on the Sabbath," her wooden casket remained at the front of the church through out the long services of the day. At the right of the pulpit sat Sue's pupils "with bowed heads and tears running down their dark faces." Robert Williams "tried hard to turn their loss to a blessing . . . urging all to follow her teachings," but when he repeated " 'The Mother is gone. We are orphans now,' sobbing broke into the open. Kate recorded that "There were no cold services that day, and to the white friends with me it was most touching."

In contrast to the beautifully soft spring Sabbath day before, the next morning when Kate and her friends returned to the

church at seven o'clock for the final rites, it was pouring rain. But the little church was again packed to the doors.

How proud the Kamiah people are to have her resting there! How sacred and beautiful the spot is. Kamiah is dearer to me than ever.⁵

Besides numerous short obituaries, two glowing eulogies appeared about Sue in the OCCIDENT. Mrs. A.L. Lindsley of Portland entitled her tribute: "A Consecrated Life." Miss Fletcher wrote in a similar vein in the PRESBYTERIAN BANNER and INDEPENDENT.⁶

After the deep emotion of Sue's death and the touching devotion of her Indian friends and students in Kamiah, Kate was suddenly aware of a penetrating empty loneliness. In all her sixty years, Kate had struggled against Sue's constantly taking the lead. Now that Kate's months of anxiety and unselfish care of Sue were over, the guiding force of her life was gone. Kate's first feeling was one of remorse for the hard thoughts she had confided in her JOURNAL; she resolved in every way possible to atone for that bitterness. She did not know what to do or where to turn, but first she must carry out Sue's last wishes, those contained in her will, drawn on September 9, 1886.

Sue had requested not only burial in the Kamiah Churchyard but also that her grave be marked by a "plain Substantial Monument?... to be inclosed in a strong iron railing," protection from the roaming cattle. Her valued Nez Perces Dictionary she willed to the Smithsonian Institute "in the interests of Science and of the Nez Perce Mission." Her share of the old Wellsville home she bequeathed to her brother and sisters, "as was the wish and will of Our Mother." A lot in Mt. Idaho was left to Robert Williams,

to remain in the possession of his family of his father Jonathan Williams (Commonly called Billy) who has always been a true and faithful friend of the Mt. Idaho people.

Her organ she gave to the Kamiah Church, where it remains many years later, dusty and unused, covered with Sabbath School litter. She requested that provision be made to send the Reverend Robert Williams and the Reverend James Hayes, each one time and Separately to the Meeting of Gen.Ass.

of Presbyterian Church in the United States at the earliest period after My death in which Said Assembly Shall Convene in Any of the Eastern States and the Board of Foreign Missions to pay from My Bequests and expenses of Said Attendance at Gen. Ass.

The residue of her estate plus the land in Iowa Sue left to the Board of Foreign Missions of the Presbyterian Church to be used to send any of her Nez Perce pupils ("save Archie Lawyer") — even in death the old feud rankled! —

as Missionaries of the Gospel . . . among the Indian tribes
. . . 1st to the Crow Indians . . . 2nd to the Shoshones . . .

There is no mention or bequest of any kind in the will to Kate, who had left her own work for months to care for her sister. She is not even mentioned in the "personal effects":

I wish Mrs. L.P. Brown and daughters . . . And Mrs. Wallace Scott . . . to Select from among My personal Effects . . . any article they may choose . . . as a small acknowledgement of their Many kindnesses to Me. the Remainder of My household goods, books Clothing etc. I wish to be equally distributed among My Nez Perce pupils.

The unwanted Kate had shared the mission experiences and trials, had vigorously defended Sue in times of trouble, but she had dared to offer unwelcome dissent. During those last weeks together, Sue must have wrung from her reluctant sister the promise to have her tombstone engraved with the name "Law," which Sue had never borne in life. In the final showdown, it was the brow-beaten, younger, unappreciated sister who oversaw the erection in the Kamiah little church yard of the largest stone in the cemetery, engraved, "Susan Law McBeth." This is the only acknowledgment of Kate's recognition of the closed episode in Sue's life. There is no word about Eben Law in Kate's account of her sister's life and work, not a whisper that Eben ever existed in either Kate's voluminous JOURNAL or her numerous extant letters.⁷

At the time of Sue's death, neither Kate nor Sue had been back to Ohio since they came to Idaho. During her first years, Sue had made several trips to neighboring Presbyteries and to Portland, but after 1888 she was unable to travel much. Now that Kate was

alone with no one to dictate her comings and goings, she began planning to return to her childhood home, which she had longed to see for seventeen years. She made arrangements to have the dictionary boxed for shipment to the Smithsonian; she could keep her eye on it at least as far as Ohio. Sue's twenty years' work had resulted in the translation of some 15,000 Nez Perce words. Kate did not know if she was going by boat [Union Pacific] or by stage via Spokane [Northern Pacific] until her half fare ticket, clerical rates, arrived from the Board. Then she learned that she had been routed over

the Northern Pacific . . . So at four o'clock Monday morning I was sitting in the stage bound for Uniontown.

While they waited for the Clearwater ferryman to come for them,

the . . . Annie Faxon shot out from her landing, headed down the Snake River, not far from us. That boat was to make connections at Riparia with the Union Pacific Railroad.

At Uniontown, the terminus of the railroad from Spokane, Kate examined the boxes stacked on the platform, looking for the precious dictionary. When she could not locate it and inquired about shipments to Washington, D.C.,

the man . . . said, 'Oh! it would go by the Union Pacific.'

Then I knew that we had parted company.

The dictionary was on the ANNIE FAXON to meet the Union Pacific.

At long last, Kate was actually on her way for the long-overdue furlough; in spite of herself, occasionally her heart would give a happy skip of anticipation at the prospect of the visit with her other sisters and their families in Wellsville and East Liverpool. The next day as the Northern Pacific transcontinental train wound through the Rockies over the new line through the mountain passes, Kate reviewed her years in Idaho. The wheels clicked off the miles, and Kate, watching the single track narrow down to a point on the horizon, concluded that God had been right in sending her to Sue. How He had tried her in those earlier years! Sue, too, had doubtless been tried. Now Kate resolved that she must soon return West, but how was she to carry on Sue's classes in Mt. Idaho and not neglect her women in Lapwai?

Drowsy in the stuffy hot car and weary from the excitement of departure, Kate's head in its old-fashioned bonnet nodded. God would show the way. He had never failed her.

The long train jerked Kate awake at a station, and she heard a newsboy shouting:

"The ANNIE FAXON blown to pieces. Boat a total loss."

Her first reaction was gratitude to God who had saved her life again:

"All on board killed or injured . . . Wrecked fifty miles below Lewiston!"

But then came the second, shattering thought:

That precious box! With twenty years' work upon it!

Immediately while she was still on the train, Kate wrote to Lewiston to find out if the box was certainly on the ill-fated ANNIE FAXON. Not until she reached Ohio did she learn that her worst fears were true, but the box had been miraculously rescued. The only person living on the Snake River below Lewiston whom Kate knew was a Mr. King, formerly a clerk at the Fort Lapwai sutler's store. Just that last spring he had moved to a farm along the river, where he was walking on the fateful morning of the wreck and "saw some stuff floating down." Seeing amid the debris a red box, he "mounted his horse" and with a noose captured the box just as it neared some rapids. As soon as he investigated its contents, he recognized that it "must be Miss Kate's sister's writing." He and his young wife took out the "soaking wet" pages and spread them out to dry in their loft, where the express agent from Portland found the manuscript, gathered it up, promising to start it again on its interrupted journey to the Smithsonian. The story of the dictionary's survival again reinforced Kate's faith that

this last act was but in keeping with the past . . . [for God had given] . . . the author of the manuscript so many tokens of . . . care.⁸

Back in Wellsville the little white house by the Ohio showed the ravages of the years, rotting and moulding from the encroachments of many spring freshets and floods. There was also a new generation of McBeths, one hard for Kate to understand. A pang of regret seized her for her Little Pet, Mary Kelloway, so long ago called to Heaven. "Artie" gangling out of

his teens was so different from the small boy she had pictured all these years. She loved her people, but her true home now was in Idaho with the Nez Perces. Maybe, Sue was right after all about not taking vacations in the East.

Among her nephews and nieces in East Liverpool were Mary's grown-up daughters, the two Crawford girls, Maizie and Elizabeth. The sisters listened spell bound in admiration to Aunt Kate's stories about her Indians. Once after Kate told of Sue's work at Mt. Idaho, concluding, "However can I carry on the work with these students of Sue's and my women in Lapwai, sixty miles distant, all so eager to learn the Christian, white way of life?"

The pretty and sincere Elizabeth grew thoughtful and replied, "Aunt Kate, I shall go back with you to Idaho."

Kate considered her answer carefully: "You would be a blessing to me, my dear, but you are not appointed by the Board. You cannot, you know, inherit your Aunt Sue's place."

"Oh, of course not, but for a year or so I could go on my own to be with you, Aunt Kate. We all know how lonely you always have been 'way out there without any of the family near-by. Surely there's something I can do to help you in God's work with the Nez Perces."

Again Kate hesitated, recalling her own enthusiasm in the long ago of inexperience. Slowly she replied, "Elizabeth, there are so many complications, so many barriers one has to live to know. You must take more time to think, to study, to pray, to consider carefully — so much . . ."

By autumn Kate was back alone on the reservation, torn in indecision. In Lapwai was the excitement and glamor of the new mission house just being completed for occupancy, near the agency buildings. Balanced against the lure of the Thaw Mission House were the handful of theological students who had been left orphaned by "the little mother's" death in Mt. Idaho. Kate felt as obligated to these men in 1893, as Sue had twenty years earlier, when she took over Spalding's class. And then there was Kamiah! Just as dear to Kate as it had been to Sue, it was now more sacred because of the lonely grave enclosed with a wrought iron fence behind the beloved church, now locked in deadly rivalry with the Second Church. Kate could not be in

three places at once, nor could she become an itinerant minister.

The school at Mt. Idaho was exerting the strongest pull of the three places until she received Jane Gay's letter:

Dear Miss Kate

We are sorry that you wrote Mrs. Thaw about your "perplexities." It was not understood and appeared like a want of good faith. Mrs. Thaw is building a home for you. If you leave it, you will never be allowed to return to Lapwai and your place is *there*. The Board will take care of Kamiah and Mt. Idaho. You are not to meddle with it. Your work is quite distinct from that of your sister's and you must not let the importunities of ignorant people make you appear vacillating in your mind. Miss Fletcher bids me tell you not to say a word of changing, or visiting Kamiah to any one. You are to go into your home, and occupy it. If you let the *minister* go in, you will be squeezed out for good. You are very simple, my dear Miss Kate and I want to scold you. You judge everybody by your self and do not know that people are generally selfish and grasping, even good people, and that one has to take some care of oneself. . . . The minister will have his home in good time, but you must not let him *preempt* yours. Of course the new church will have meetings in your big room but you must keep your own quarters in your own hand. So mind—say nothing to anybody. . . . you dear good soul. We are very fond of you. God bless you. Love to all the friends.

E.J. Gay⁹

Despite Miss Gay's admonitions, Kate did spend some of the winter months in Mt. Idaho during 1893-94, enough to justify the report that:

Miss Kate McBeth is expecting to continue to give instruction at Mount Idaho, with Mrs. Carrie Shearer serving as her assistant.¹⁰

But Kate did not jeopardize her occupancy of the new Thaw Mission House in Lapwai. In the shuffle of responsibilities following Sue's death, the Reverend Alexander Adair had been moved from Moscow to Lapwai

as the titular head of the whole Nez Perce mission . . .

because the powers that be thought it . . . better . . . but Miss [Kate] McBeth was always the real head . . .¹¹

Changes in schools, personnel, and housing were by no means the only ones. Within weeks of Sue's death, her chief antagonist, Archie Lawyer, had died. Miss Fletcher commented in a letter:

I hardly think James Lawyer can hold as wide an influence as Archie. I hope now that the little church will have peace and rest . . .¹²

But the greatest change in Kate's life was the advent of her niece, who came from Ohio in 1894. The arrival of the young attractive Elizabeth Crawford brought to the mission a third generation of devoted workers. She was a great asset to Lapwai where with her fresh enthusiasm she undertook to teach the younger pupils and to guide the Young People's Christian Endeavor, "enlarging the work among the women and young people." Elizabeth's presence freed Kate to devote more time to both groups of pupils: those who formerly met at Mt. Idaho and her own at Lapwai. To learn the Nez Perce language and to be introduced to the various families, Elizabeth frequently accompanied her aunt on her calls about the village. On such an early visit, Elizabeth impulsively picked up an appealing baby, who immediately wailed with fright. Kate rescued him and he instantly quieted down in her arms. Puzzled, the newcomer asked the mother why the baby didn't cry in "Aunt Kate's arms." The Nez Perce mother's reply was one of the greatest accolades Kate ever received: "Oh, but she isn't white."

A year and a half after Elizabeth's arrival, the other Crawford sister, Maizie, arrived in March 1895. Because of her special musical ability, Maizie now took over Elizabeth's work with the young people, and Elizabeth devoted more of her efforts to the older members of the tribe. She rubbed their backs, applied mustard plasters, and administered the orders of the doctor, of whom they were terrified. The young nieces had been brought up in a home where their father had taught "singing schools" during the winter months and had given his family both a love of music and training that enabled his daughters to contribute much to the Nez Perces musical development. From the beginning, Elizabeth had won and retained the admiration and respect of her Indian students with her musical ability. But it was

Maizie with her "remarkable singing voice" who quickly took the lead. It was a great challenge to the Crawford "girls" to train these young Nez Perces in an art that was almost totally foreign to them. Originally the only singing the tribe had was of war or sorrow, "weird chants in a minor key." There was no tradition of songs of happiness, and the hymns inherited from Spalding were long-forgotten, or worse, distorted. Rapidly growing in popularity, soon each week there was a Tuesday Night Sing in the Thaw Mission House.¹³

Maizie describes her first impression of Lewiston as a village "with one street of small buildings, the roofs of which were mostly moss covered." Within the first month after Maizie "stepped from the gang plank . . . [of] the Snake River boat" there was an event of unusual civilized significance in Lewiston, an Oratorio, QUEEN ESTHER. Because of the Crawford musical interests, the sisters must surely have wanted to hear it, but there is no record of their attendance. Its cast included former Lapwai associates of Aunt Kate's: Mr. and Mrs. "Charlie" Monteith, and the Reverend T.M. Boyd. Even despite its Biblical theme and its clerical participants, the evening may have been too worldly for mission workers; perhaps Aunt Kate's lingering dislike of "Charlie" could have prevented the "girls" attending. Shortly after Elizabeth introduced Maizie to the reservation and its people, she left to return to Ohio, and Maizie took over her sister's duties as another of "Miss Katenim eighth" [niece].¹⁴

This year, 1895, in Nez Perce tribal history was notable for two major events. In August came the long-anticipated first payment of government funds from the sale of their tribal lands. Soon after Miss Fletcher had completed the allotment, three government commissioners had come to buy the surplus or unallotted land, meeting much opposition from the Nez Perces who worried, "What are we going to do with our cattle and horses?" Kate and Maizie always maintained that the Nez Perces had another reason to oppose the sale of this "extra land." After a week of persuasive arguments and "attractive inducements," no progress had been made by the commissioners. According to the missionaries, the Nez Perces' main objection was:

As soon as the reservation is opened the white man will bring in his saloon among our people to destroy us.

Finally, a "prohibitory clause" was inserted in the treaty," and the necessary minimum number of names was secured; this "prohibitory clause" made "it an offense to sell liquor to an Indian, or bring it upon what had been the reservation."¹⁵

Practically two years had elapsed since this episode before the Nez Perces' money arrived, accompanied by soldiers from Fort Walla Walla, to protect the Indians from the unscrupulous white "rough element." Kate especially was anxious over the outcome of this unaccustomed wealth doled out to people largely inexperienced in the handling of any sizable amount of money. She worked hard to instill in her pupils that it "was a time to test the honesty of the Nez Perces." She was deeply gratified:

Many of them had debts. I think, with few exceptions, they hunted up their creditors and paid them. Two Nez Perces came . . . straight to my house . . . with the money in their pockets. One of them had owed me — perhaps for ten years. The other one had years before been sick, and of my own will I sent a physician to him. He now wished to pay for this . . . The most of them made good use of the money. They built better houses and barns, and bought American horses and sewing-machines.¹⁶

It was not merely the missionaries who were pleased with the response of the Nez Perces to the government payments. The growing substantial business community of Lewiston agreed:

The payment of the Indian money proceeded very quietly all week at the Agency . . . One thing noticeable is . . . that the Indians use good judgment in making their purchases. Indian goods have always been shoddy . . . but the Nez Perces have been selecting the best of everything . . . they have avoided the cheaper goods, preferring to pay good prices for substantial family carriages. The Indians as a class have contemplated, secured and utilized this money with better judgment and more in accordance with true business principles than a chance selection of an equal number of white men . . . This speaks well for the future. The foundation of civilization is true business thrift of the individuals of any community.¹⁷

Even later historians, not entirely sympathetic with the early

missionary efforts, admit:

In this expenditure, the natural shrewdness of the Indians was a great help, but much credit should also be given to the McBeths for their influence.¹⁸

A necessary prelude to the second 1895 significant event in the lives of the Nez Perces was the completion during the year of two long-anticipated routes into the center of the reservation. The Clearwater River was opened to navigation as far as Kamiah and from the other direction, Lapwai, up on the Camas Prairie, the first bridge was built across Lawyer's Canyon:

96 feet long with stringers 14 inches square and the central span 26 feet.

These two avenues of approach to the potentially rich farming acres aided the

'sooners' . . . a steady stream of vehicles . . . with homesteaders and their equipment . . . three hundred camped in Cottonwood that Sunday night . . . two hundred wagons and outfits . . . along the Willow Creek settlements near the Craig Mountains.¹⁹

On the next day, a raw cold Monday, November 18, the official opening of the Reservation was signalled at exactly noon by the sharp report of a pistol. Now these hungry settlers could legally fan out across the Camas Prairie, taking the land they had so long coveted. Down in Lapwai Kate stood at the door of her cottage and watched "such poor looking white people" passing by "to take up land [of] the Nez Perces."²⁰

Kate had struggled with her own conscience, with the power structure of the church, and with the advice of well-meaning friends over the disposition of Sue's work at Mt. Idaho. And it is evident that for some time the theological students did not study regularly. Sporadically they drifted to Lapwai from Mt. Idaho or Kamiah with questions seeking advice. Despite the Mission cottage, there was a perennial housing shortage near the mission grounds. In order to continue teaching Kate needed desperately more housing for the married students and their families. Just when Kate's resourcefulness was about exhausted, her prayers were answered: some women from Indianapolis wrote that they wished to build a memorial for their pastor's wife. Again Kate rejoiced in God's Providential Care of the Nez Perces:

[The Rondthaler cottage] was built in 1896 . . . ready for those Kamiah families that fall. It is near the Thaw cottage, my home, and pupils can be seated around my study table by eight o'clock in the morning. The wives are under the care of my niece (Maizie). A delightful work is mine, opening the door into the treasure house by teaching my pupils how to translate the Bible.²¹

At long last Kate had "delightful work . . . my pupils," men to teach without the jealous interference from an older sister!

Old Billy Williams was one of the few old-timers who had witnessed these drastic changes in the Nez Perce tribal status. Revered as a patriarch, whose boyhood memories stretched back to the early Spalding days, Uncle Billy was cherished by the Christian Nez Perces and their missionaries. Now perhaps nearer eighty than seventy, he was growing feeble, but his mind remained clear and his faith unshakable. Kate had always much preferred the simple father to his more pretentious son who appealed to Sue. It was now to her that Uncle Billy dictated a letter he wished her to send to his friends:

I am sitting here in Miss Kate's house on the south side and she on the north side of the room. I want to tell you that I remember you good. I remember you quick as lightning or as a star falls. So I go near to you in spirit quick.

Although I may never see you on this earth when we come to God's land we will see each other. Although my heart is heavy because absent is Miss McBeth, for I am still of the people, she is now of the spirit people. So I show my heart to you both, my beloved. Your God is my Father and my maker. At times when temptations or trouble comes upon me from the people, I am weak, just as if my small weak body was not able to rise up with so many pounds of burden upon it. And I go staggering along the way, and then my weak heart cries out. Now I must fall. But then comes my Helper and I rise up quick and hurry along, as if I only had one pound upon my back.

Nicodemus went to Jesus by night to ask wisdom of him.

But he did not want the people to know he needed wisdom. But I am not like Nicodemus. Although the people know I go by this letter to you.

There is no mountains now, nor *never* was between Miss Axtell, Miss Fletcher and Miss Gay and my heart. I can travel straight to you. I do not want to make myself a great one by writing to you. I write you to tell you my faith in you is true, so you my beloved may see into my heart and know how full of joy it is to write this letter to you.²²

No one was unprepared for the approaching end of old Billy's days, but to have his son die at practically the same time from an infection was a great blow not only to Kate but also to the Christian Kamiahans. Robert Williams in the last few years had suffered much mentally and physically from the charges brought against him by opposing forces in Kamiah and within the tribe. Sue's insistence on making him a mouthpiece for a theocracy to govern at least Kamiah and possibly all the tribe made Robert the target for anyone who was dissatisfied with tribal affairs. Robert had taken advantage of the provision in Sue's will to attend General Assembly in 1895 at Pittsburgh, where he spoke before the large gathering, making his usual favorable impression. While he was in the East, he visited a good many congregations and also the Ohio McBeth family in Wellsville. Just a year after his return to Idaho, tragedy struck. The letter that brought the news to Kate was written by a member of Robert's church:

Dear Kate McBeth

Dear Friend

I now again will write you a few lines about father Williams. This morning about 20 minutes after 6 o'clock he says I must write you that father wants you to write letters to everyone of his white friends and let them know that he is to depart us and to leave his friendship between them and his family.

And Robt Williams he has not been very well two days, and he has not been able to attend and serve his people in Lord's Supper, but bro. Parson took his place and done pretty well. O! seem whole Kamiah is very sorry about to loss our one of the elders Billy and minister,

lots of 2nd church came in to Wm's homes to visited them with their tears and prays even James Lawyer, oh how sad and sad and full of prays was one sunday yesterday.

Lots of good sermons was preached by our studens which encouraged many people who were discouraged and were sad that day, and to meet in heaven 'go and we shall meet as you have come to church and have meet your friends' says Stephen Axtell to the people etc.

I am your friend.

L.W. Jonas²³

In the past, Kate had criticized Sue's open partiality for Robert, and she had defended both Archie and James Lawyer occasionally, for she could not help admiring their quick wit, intelligence, and independent opposition to Sue's dictation. At times she had secretly enjoyed seeing Robert have competition, but as the years passed, she had come to recognize Robert's sincere Christian spirit, his effective preaching and leadership in the First Church of Kamiah. Now her heart ached anew in half-guilty remorse for Sue's comforting domination in the loss of these two staunch friends, father and son.

Kate missed all three of these "dear departed ones" particularly as spring burst over the Lapwai valley. Warm weather brought relief to her aching joints from the damp winter months, but it also brought the dread of another approaching Fourth. As each fearful Fourth neared, Kate rehearsed all the graphic details to Maizie. She related Miss Gay's bravery when the heathen Fourth had been expelled from the agency and mission grounds. Since then, the Nez Perces had celebrated two Fourths: the one heathen, the other Christian. Maizie was still very new to the mission that first Fourth of 1895 when

The first tent pitched on the [heathen] ground was old Chief Joseph's . . . he rode up to the fence one morning to speak to my aunt and I shook hands with him . . . he still holds on to his heathenism, lives with two wives, and brings much wickedness into the tribe.²⁴

In Kate's opinion, the pagan celebrations had become progressively more raucous and evil, "heathenism raged."

Finally in 1897, the Indian elders became so incensed at the inroads this annual barbaric ritual was making upon the church and particularly among the young people that they took their problem to Presbytery. The result was that

A letter was written to the Nez Perces Christians by Dr. Gunn, the Synodical Missionary, which closed with the text, "Wherefore come out from among them, and be ye separate, said the Lord, and touch not the unclean thing, and I will receive you . . .

Not long before the 1897 Fourth, Robert's successor at the First Church of Kamiah, James Hayes, was summoned to Lapwai and asked to read this letter before the congregation there. It was announced that all Christians would camp in the government school grounds at the fort and that "the elders expected [them] to pitch their tents there, but if they chose to camp with the heathen, they must stay there." There were only about twenty acres separating the two camps, but the elders were very firm in their edict that

there was to be no crossing over from one camp to the other — not even to take the Lord's Supper, which was to be administered on the Sabbath. Those who went into the heathen camp were to be considered suspended members until such time as they chose to show sorrow for their acts and confess their sins.

Taken by surprise, their indignation aroused "some of the leaders of the wild ones," who as soon as the church service was over, began riding around and around the building issuing at the top of their voices a most enticing invitation to everyone to come over to the "other camp" because "there would be worship there" too, adding as the clinching argument that

No one has any right to divide the people. The Lord will do that when he comes.

Great consternation reigned; families were divided: father against son, brother against sister, and worst of all, husband against wife:

some of our good Christian women were told by their heathen husbands, 'If you do not come with us to the heathen camp, we will get other wives.'

"Drawing the line so closely" brought anxiety to both camps.

Rumors flew fast of this or that church defecting to the heathen camp. In full preparation and celebration, the two distinct groups were separated only by the agency-mission grounds, upon which Kate's Thaw cottage stood, near the rocky creek bottom:

our hearts were up and down . . . Nevertheless, at the appointed time our Lapwai committee pitched their tents and began . . . hauling wood and tent-poles from the mountain . . . for the expected brethren.

Oh! what anxious days they were, and how we watched the people to see whether they would turn into the Christian camp or pass on to the other side . . . on one side the sound of tom-toms and war dancing . . . on the other the songs of Zion and the praise of worshippers.²⁵

After the tension of the last two weeks of prayerful yet fearful preparations, a perfect day dawned for the crucial Fourth of July climactic observation. As noon approached, word reached the apprehensive Christians of "great excitement in the heathen camp . . . bedecking themselves and their horses with paint, donning feathers, war bonnets and beads — a most gorgeous display" portended "a sham battle and a parade . . . as an insult to the Christians." This procession, "all their old heathenism," was planning to go "in and through the Christian camp."

The land was full from fence to fence with yelling, painted, almost naked Indians riding horseback.

Just at that time seven Christian men [led by Edward Reboin] rode from the Christian camp and turned their horses heads and thus formed a line across the road, facing the oncoming multitude. When they came up . . . they halted them and said, 'You will go no further to insult God's people.' The leaders of that procession were determined to pass. [led by Jim Reuben] There were angry speeches from the balked riders and firm but decided words from the seven men, who never wavered, till finally the whole multitude turned and rode the other way.²⁶

Kate, who had spent much of the frightening morning closeted indoors on her trembling knees, now arose and

announced with certainty that "Surely the day of miracles is not past." Among the visiting white ministers who had watched this confrontation from the safety of the mission porch or from behind the curtained windows was a newcomer to the West, the very young and inexperienced Reverend James A. Hedges. Infused with great missionary zeal he had hung on every word from the oldest minister in the Presbytery, Alexander Adair. Of him the outspoken Jane Gay had written Kate more than a year ago:

I do not see how Adair could be kept on another year.

The Board are not so full of funds that they can afford such luxuries.²⁷

Hardly had the morning's threat been turned back before Kate faced another crisis, right in her own household with Mr. Hedges. The young man, still agog over the noon excitement of the blocked parade, stood watching with the senile Mr. Adair the continuing

great stir in the heathen camp down the creek. We saw a great band of naked savages come sweeping down the hillsides . . . yelling like demons and brandishing their fire arms and spears; behind them came women riding astride their ponies and adding their shrill cries to the yells of the warriors.

As Kate passed through her front room, aware of the great novelty this heathen exhibition held for her guests, she impulsively and hospitably handed them her field glasses. As Mr. Hedges related:

So much more interesting did the field glasses make the scene . . . that I said to Mr. Adair, 'I would like to see that closer.' And Mr. Adair said 'I would too.' And before Miss McBeth had time to stop us . . .

Kate looked out her window and saw the long-legged young minister streaking across the field toward the heathen camp with the elderly one puffing along the best he could. Behind them their dignified Prince Albert clerical coat-tails streamed out in the breeze their hurry created. Kate was aghast at the spectacle and completely helpless. She knew full well that Alexander Adair had sat right beside her at the last Presbytery, nodding with the unaccustomed spring heat, even taking once or twice a good

deep half-smothered snore. It was no excuse that he was napping when the motion had been carried with due Nez Perce solemnity that no Christian should enter the heathen camp on pain of censure of session or presbytery. The Reverend Adair technically in charge of all the Nez Perce Mission work — it had come to a pretty pass — letting that innocent young minister, so recently arrived, influence him like that. The poor young man undoubtedly did not know about Presbytery's action, and now it would be up to her to tell him; how could she ever explain in sufficient detail to such a nice appearing Christian young man the real deviltry, the unimaginable horror of such a camp? Kate blushed trying to find words appropriate for a lady-missionary to use.

While Kate was puzzling over this newest dilemma, the two Reverends

went . . . in and out of that heathen camp . . . the last time the government permitted such a gathering of wild Indians . . . we . . . saw all the devilish glamour and savage gorgeousness that covered every kind of wickedness that human mind can invent. Always the solemn beat of the tom-tom and the hi-yi, ki-yi, of the Indian dancers in their teepees or around the camp-fires. There was gambling going on incessantly; warriors dressed in sweeping eagle feathers, riding on horses with silver mounted trappings; women in their gay blankets and highly colored handkerchiefs around their heads and daintily embroidered mocassins on their feet forever on the go or busy about their teepees; children and dogs everywhere.

Finally the two men dragged themselves home toward Kate's cottage, exhausted and overwhelmed by what they had seen. Kate met them with "rather a half guilty and half amused smile." She informed them in her most school-teacherish dignified manner that during their absence some of the Indian ministers and elders, all her good friends, had come to her in shocked dismay. There was nothing to do but to bring charges against these two erring brethren before Presbytery for chastisement. Resolutions were resolutions and the color of a man's skin could not excuse such a flagrant, open defiance of the Church's edict.

But in spite of herself Kate

had a great sense of humor and every now and then would burst out laughing as she described her sensations when she saw that old minister and the young one . . . hot footing it across the fields to the heathen camp.²⁸

Although understanding sympathetically how important this breach of church discipline was to the Nez Perces Christian leaders, Kate half-hoped by the next Presbytery, almost a year away, they might overlook it. But she should have known her Nez Perces better than that.

the next April, when on my way to presbytery, Elder Matt [Whitfield] came running up from the church, and asked if I had that writing. I asked, 'What writing?' He replied, 'The charges to presbytery against those white ministers.' I said, 'That is not my business. That is yours. I only carry the session records.' He said, 'All right. Then Eddie [E.J. Conner] will write it for us.'"

The charges were made, and the Reverend Adair and the Reverend Hedges were severely reprimanded, satisfying the Lapwai elders that

the presbytery did not pass lightly over the breaking of a law, although it had been made for Indians and broken by the white brethren.

Remaining true to the literal teaching of Genesis, the ministers, mere men after all, in answering the charges, appropriately passed on the blame to Kate, for if like Mother Eve she had not given them the field-glass to see the heathen sights, they might never have been tempted to go.²⁹

Except for Miss Kate's discomforture, Mr. Hedges, an old man, recounting this event many years later, had no regret that I went and saw what I did that afternoon. Never would we see the like again . . . Perhaps I prized most of all my glimpse of old Chief Joseph.

When Kate took time to think back over the last few years, they seemed to have flown by. Released from Sue's rigidity and supported by Maizie's companionship, her younger strength and view point, the aging Kate grew more relaxed and flexible in many aspects. Maizie undertook to convince Kate that the early

experiences the McBeth sisters had had with corrupt and inefficient Indian agents must not prejudice her judgment now of all government personnel. With the reservation open and newcomers arriving daily, there were among them many with standards similar to those of their own Ohio background. The old-time rough pioneer was passing. The younger missionary came "to the defense of the fine people . . . employed by the government . . . the majority of them [with] common sense, big hearts and they know the Indian."³⁰

No longer did Kate feel guilty accepting such luxuries as "the household plunder" Jane Gay sent from the dismantled Chicago home of her sister. Kate indulged her long-repressed nestmaking instinct in enjoying the old lounge and rocking chair, the book case, lamp, the freight for which Mrs. Thaw paid. Miss Gay even included grand "portieres for the opening between your bedroom and the sitting room." They arrived with all the necessary appurtenances for hanging and careful directions because "nobody uses rings now." The eastern friends were concerned about "how many sheets" or "any white table cloths" and "what kind of a stove have you for your sitting room?" With her arthritic joints Kate should no longer have to depend upon "open fires [which] will not do for the coldest weather."³¹

These years of Kate's were summarized by James Hedges, who had unwittingly caused her such acute embarrassment:

a plain Scotch body, short of stature, with kindly grey eyes that could grow stern on occasion [well did he know!] . . . strong chin and resolute will, inflexible and adamant when a question of right arose and yet she was one of the gentlest and sweetest of Christians.³²

CHAPTER 16

OUT OF THE BLANKET

Kate's nature with her touch of humor and warm-hearted love of people gave her a wider influence among the Nez Perces than Sue ever could have had with her cold, precise, intellectual approach to a chosen few. Kate lived to see the reality of Spalding's dream inherited by Sue. "Miss Kate's" final twenty years of service became a benediction to her and to the mission.

By 1900, sustained by her niece, Kate was gratified by the broadening scope of the mission work. Maizie gradually took over more and more responsibility, watching over Kate with love and solicitude, whose life became mellowed and enriched. Because she had always been naturally friendly and out-going, loving people and their activities in the church, Kate was universally loved. Maizie says of her aunt during these sunset years:

[Kate's] work was out among the people, visiting in their homes, teaching the women to sew, cook and take care of their homes and children. It was the beginning of the change in their lives from the old to the new. She was trying to break the old custom of the women doing most of the heavy work. It was strange teaching for them and hard to understand.

Kate sat one evening over their evening meal, chortling about her latest encounter.

"Maizie, I'll never cease being surprised by these people, even my own dear women after all these years. You'd never guess what came up today?"

"No, Aunt Kate, what now?"

"Well — Sadie, Sadie of all people, just said to me as I started away, 'Now Miss Kate, wouldn't you be ashamed to see Peter making wood?' I just never can seem to convince them that there is dignity and worth in any honest work. But still I won't give up."

Kate didn't give up and

it was not long till the men were "making the wood," going out and catching the horse, harnessing it and driving around with the buggy or hack for the wife and children.'

But Kate could not limit herself exclusively to the Lapwai and Kamiah Indians. She reminded herself of another long-term objective of Sue's: the provision in her will to provide the funds for the Nez Perces to Christianize other heathen tribes. Early in her Idaho days Kate's practical nature had predicted that there would some time be too many ministers, and now here they were, far outnumbering the available churches. What better solution than to send licentiates to other tribes? During Sue's life time, ministers from the tribe had gone to the Spokanes, Umatillas, and to the Joseph Band in Oklahoma.²

Although it was Sue's vision to send out an Indian ministry from the Nez Perce tribe, it fell to Kate to become the confidante and director for these missionary journeys. Her warm interest in other's experiences and her ability as a listener made her most effective in encouraging these endeavors. Many were the letters that came to Kate from these travelers who were organized in teams. Usually ten or a dozen Nez Perce Presbyterians, sometimes as many as twenty-five, accompanied one preacher. These extra helpers cared for the horses, which were necessary for transportation and provisions; some led the singing and others gave general assistance in the evangelical undertaking. Basically reminiscent of their old tribal wandering days, the Nez Perces just loved being on the move.

The group traveled "on the raven's fund," expecting hospitality from their hosts. Sometimes even that was not forthcoming, so the visitors were hungry and cold. One of Kate's correspondents related:

Some of the Christians of Kamiah went with me on a missionary trip to the Shoshones . . . It was a rough road over the mountains. In one of the deep canyons, we killed a bear. I think we travelled, going and coming [each way] 600 miles . . .

The Nez Perces "stayed about a week," but these Indians "did not want to hear about Jesus . . . not many came to our meetings" so

in the morning I showed my heart to my companions . . .
we took a ride to the depot . . . [and] went on the train . . .
and came to Ross's Fork at two o'clock in the morning.
Cold, weary, hungry, and penniless, the group was disconsolate,
puzzled, "What shall we do? Where shall we go?" They spent the
rest of the night huddled in the bushes by the creek, and when
they appeared at eight o'clock the next morning apparently from
nowhere, they answered their surprised questioners by
announcing,

We came here to tell you about your Savior, Jesus Christ,
and about your souls.

The unprepared heathen, not enthusiastic over their souls,
turned their backs and disappeared, leaving their uninvited
guests still destitute. The Nez Perces found a Shoshone tent
where they stayed "a whole day and night without any food . . .
[with] sorrowful hearts." The minister

took out my Bible and read . . . 'Jesus said to them, the
foxes have holes and the birds of the air have nests, but
the Son of Man hath not where to lay his head.' After
these words we had prayer. Next morning we left.³

Enoch Pond's letter to Kate in 1902 gives an idea of the
language problems and the perplexities of these mission tours.
Enoch was not a novice as a missionary, for he and his wife Rachel
had had experience with the Spokanes. But still he obviously had
to resort to trial and error tactics:

Kate C. McBeth

My dear Sister

I was received from you good letter and I was very glad I
thank you are well. And I do say to you I am well and wife
she is well and I was after time not safely and I do not
think perhaps now I will sick and I am safely just now I do
say to you.

Again I will tell you about my work. I did preach in the
morning and in the Sunday School. Afternoon did study
English language [with] Rev. J.M. Cornelison, and I did
interpret about the Nez Perce language and did teach
unto the people.

And now shall be New Good Church in this summer that

hath busy of Rev. J.M. Cornelison. Of people is now collection five hundred and from Board one thousand, such I do hear.

And when I came from that time, childrens they have the baptize seventh and one man are all well eighth. And are dead third children and one man all were baptize twelfth by my hand that is.

Enoch Pond

And is unbaptize that man of the Catholic. Mr. Cornelison say not again to baptize. Is now is the baptize such that is all.⁴

One of the more prolific of the Nez Perce correspondents Kate had was James Hayes. Among his people James Hayes was an outstanding missionary and a personage, the heir to Robert Williams' prestige and pulpit. A man of humble origin, he became the leader of the Nez Perce ministers. Attending General Assembly on Sue's bequest, he told of his own childhood to the hushed auditorium filled with the spell-bound, impressed white listeners:

My friends . . . I must tell you a little about myself, first. I was a wild heathen boy when the Joseph war began. I was one of the White Bird band . . . A long time after I came to Kamiah, I could not see the light. Then, through the preaching of my red brother, Robert Williams, my blind eyes began to open. He took the blanket off my shoulders, put a coat on me — cut my hair — then led me to Miss McBeth's school, where I began to study the Bible. My friends, you know the rest about me.⁵

James Hayes wrote Kate not only of his successes but also of his perplexities, his urgent problems. Hubert, his associate in missionary expeditions, presented great concern because of his pretty young wife.

My dear Miss McBeth

I want let you know about Hubert. He have great trouble between him and his wife and another trouble he have at Agency. some people told he will be arrest by Agent next Saturday but Hubert is here at Mission House he is still Christian and Elder. I dont think I will go Duck Valley by this time it is very hard for me to go it is very cold.

Duck vally is 100 miles from railroad Station go four or five days from Mountain Home to Duck Valley. and I hope I stay here one more Sabbath with Miss Frost then I will go back to Kamiah. I shall reach Kamiah 4 days of December if my God will so.

Yours truly
James Hayes⁶

The next year, Hubert's wife caused even deeper consternation; and Miss Frost, a mission worker at Fort Hall, became involved as her letters told Kate:

Hubert and wife were separated again by the Agt. and both Brdie and Caroline are in the school.

Hubert and wife are having more trouble. She ran away last Wed. was around Blackfoot. Hubert & Charlie Peterson, who works for Hubert, came Monday — and took her home — have not heard from them since.⁷

During the spring of 1907, Hubert's wife vacillated between accesses of Christian piety and sensual binges that made her a spiritual sister of Mary Magdalene. To Hubert, Miss Frost, James Hayes, and the absent Kate McBeth, she was an incurable vampire, a great cross to bear. Miss Frost continued the story:

I think I wrote you Sabbath evening that Hubert's wife has left him again. I didn't see her but it seems she was at the Agency Saturday — the matron told me that she is now staying at the school. Wants to go away to some non-Reservation school I hear. James told me your advice to him the same as your note and I said see that you act upon it. If she comes home leave her the house but see that she gets no opportunity to tell any lies about you . . .

Shades of Robert Williams and his troubles with women! Kate was frantic that the pastor of the First Kamiah Church was doomed to fall into such traps. But James Hayes was more adroit than Brother Williams and followed explicitly the white women's advice to safety. Hubert's wife appealed to Miss Frost to write a letter of confession for her, when the request was denied, she undertook herself to write

several pages saying this day she wanted to tell the truth

and be forgiven by Jesus and by those she had lied to and be fit to go to Heaven and see her baby that she lied in court last fall that she had run away from Hubert three times and every time had lain with other men. That below were the names of the white men and Indians who had slept with her (I think there were 27 names in all, given names, no surnames.) Wrote she wanted to live with Hubert. That she would like to have the Indian woman who had coaxed her to stay in the coal shed at a white man's house and the white men (8 or 10) who came to them & some of them didn't pay anything punished. She gave me the paper to read and I was more than glad that I had not consented to write it. They took the paper to the agency and later at the trial in Indian Court she said what she had written was not true.⁸

Evangelist Hayes left Hubert and his troublesome wife behind when he moved on to new fields "white for the harvest." Although he ventured south almost to the Grand Canyon, most of his missionary trips were toward the north.

Dear McBeth

We have service at two o'clock and after service second Chief Siyawashat say I am very glad to hear what you tell us this afternoon you made remember what our Chief Moses says long time ago. Mose tell us we will be Christian in Presbyterian Church not in the Catlick I am very glad this afternoon and I want to be a Christian but not now we wait our Chief Joe Moses whenever he will be back and we will talk about it. dear friends it is true Christianity is very good for every body I like to be a Christian very much. But what I told we wait our Chief. dear James you come long ways to bring good news for us and I am very glad you come to visit us and tell us about Jesus our saviour. you tell us true and good.

I think I will never forget what you preach to us.

[Added later in the day]

I want let you know about our meeting we have very good meeting this afternoon. and after service second Chief Siyawashat speake to us. and I write what he speak but not all I write. and I enclose with this letter and will

please correction my write and send back to Kamiah. I want to see you very much but I am not sure I will go. Mr. White and Garry they wants to go back home very much they don't like stay any longer. I am your friend.

Jas. Hayes⁹

Among the Washington Indians he found a sect he called the Shakes, the antithesis of the Shaker colonies buried away in the hills of western Massachusetts and New York. From Neah Bay in February, 1905, he reported that he'd been ill and was discouraged because the dances of the Shakes were taking away his audience. Within the next week although the Shakes were still holding "dance almost every night," three women and five men "want to be Christian." Two years later he reported from Seattle that he was leaving Neah Bay satisfied that despite the Shakes . . . baptized 14 of them last Sun. . . . most of them all young men and women . . . just only man about the same my age.¹⁰

Not all the white people who met James Hayes were as understanding of him as Miss Frost. A Portland woman wrote Kate complaining of her house guest's unconventional hours and eating habits:

James [Hayes] is fond of something good to eat without doubt. He seldom got up before eleven for breakfast, dinner about four and his third meal when he came from church. I would not cook at that hour and gave him cold meat and fried eggs. He did not like fried potatoes told me his wife always fed them to the hens and cooked new ones for him. I told him I thought likely she did not pay \$2.00 a sack for them.

Furthermore he had become completely

Like the white men he wants to have 'a good showing at Presbytery.' He told me both times to be sure and tell Presbytery how many he baptized.

His hostess "objected to his wholesale baptism for they consider themselves Christians when they are baptized." She did concede that "he is a good man but unfortunately does not know everything . . . [was] not suited to these coast Indians as well as the interior ones."¹¹

It was from among the "interior Indians" that James Hayes' letters to Kate show his progress and growth down through the years in the mission field. He had absolute confidence that Miss Kate could solve every perplexing dilemma:

Miss K.C. McBeth

I take the pen and write to you, and let you know about these Indians these people want to build the Church very much. It is true we have to be build Church here Because these Indians have well attandant to every meetings. every Sunday and Thursday. we are very glad about it. Because we found some good friends both white people and Indians. these people white and Indians asked me so times about the Church build they asked me when you will Build the Church. and I told to them I dont know yet when that I have no money in my hand for the Build Church. yesterday one white man promise to me and help me So he says if you build Church and let me know and then I will help you. Dear sister what I do or else what I tell to people. I wish you would write to me where I get money for the Build the Church.

It is no doubt Miss Frost will help to us becaus she is good Christian worker she life here among the Shoshones Indians twelfth years now. I have nothing to say any more now.

Your truly Bro. in Christ
James Hayes¹²

Many of James Hayes' more significant missions took him into the South, deep into Mormon territory. Here he found himself again burdened with decisions in distant places:

My dear Miss McBeth

Your letter came to me and I was so glad to get it. I hope you want hear about me so I tell you. I am little sick two days I do not sleep good. But they think I will get better soon. Mr. and Mrs. Foster are both well. as you know they wants me stay here until Church will be done. But I dont stay here very long. that I have more work among Duck Valley Indians.

I expect to leave them next Monday 18 Nov. for Ft. Hall Church and will spend Sabbath there with Miss Frost. I hope commence Church build next Wednesday. And Carpenter think the Church will be finish some time before or after Christmas. Miss Wilson (teach of St. George) wants me to come to St. George to preach to Mormon but I dont like to go. I want stay among Shiwits. I have no time to write a letter now.

Your brother in Christ
Jos Hayes¹³

Maizie Crawford credited James Hayes with having reached twenty-five tribes between the Canadian border and Arizona before his death in 1928. What joy it would have brought the McBeth sisters to have seen Whitworth College bestow the first honorary D.D. on a Nez Perce in 1926, James Hayes!¹⁴

It may have been partially due to her voluminous correspondence with the scattered Nez Perces that Kate found herself writing more and more. Both the McBeth women had always read missionary publications diligently and over the years had contributed articles to current magazines. Now to have the time for writing, and to see her own articles in these periodicals was rewarding. Most of all she rejoiced that others might know the results of Sue's vision and her own practical application. Late in 1896, to the OCCIDENT Kate sent a picture of Sue and a summary of her life, concentrating on the Nez Perce years. Another article described her own teaching, "An Indian Theological Class."¹⁵

An impetus to Kate's growing literary ambitions could have come from the long hours she was spending with her pupils poring over an edition of Christian hymns in the Nez Perce language. This project was stimulated by James Hayes' trip in 1896 when he went East to General Assembly, carrying out the provision of Sue's will. He stopped in Chicago, where he was the guest of Mrs. Rumsey and her sister, Miss Juliet Axtell, who had visited the reservation in 1888. As they shared their Christian "witness" in the sumptuous Lake Forest home of the financier and discussed the future of the Nez Perces Mission, the plan to print Nez Perces hymns evolved. The Axtell sisters had for years been fascinated by the mystery of Indian sign language, especially

Miss Axtell. She had produced on her own hand press various cards and directions for the use of this universal Indian sign language; in addition she had for some time used her leisure in printing calling cards, special bits of poetry, and greeting cards for friends. Now this contribution to the Nez Perce religious guidance was a welcome undertaking, one combining Miss Axtell's pleasure in working with her press and her desire to be of use in The Kingdom.

Juliet Axtell could hardly wait until James Hayes was back in Idaho to send her translations of the Christian hymns selected:

She installed a hand printing press in our attic and laboured indefatigably . . . in the proof reading she was assisted by my mother.

Miss Kate "suggested" those hymns to be translated by the two "collaborators," James Hayes and the superintendent of his First Church Sunday School, Levi Jonas. When Miss Axtell received the first copy, she ran them off her press, and then

these corrected proofs were sent to Kamiah for further correctings. This process was repeated over and over for each hymn.

It was a happy day in the Rumsey household when finally, a year and a half after James Hayes' visit,

the little booklet with thirty-one hymns was sent forth from our attic . . . to the Nez Perce churches,

its title page, "Gospel Hymns in the Nez Perce Language," Lake Forest, Illinois, August, 1897.¹⁶

Because one of the collaborators had "passed to his reward" during the months of preparation, the frontspiece carried the picture of Levi W. Jonas. In the introduction, Juliet L. Axtell acknowledges "the invaluable aid" of the two Nez Perces and Miss Kate McBeth. "This partial collection" of the most frequently used "Pentecostal Hymns" had been gathered from those "precious seasons of Revival" that extended from the days of "H.H. Spalding in 1837 to . . . the Christmas Season of 1896-7." Since the late Reverend Robert Williams had translated "many of the more familiar hymns . . . and adapted [them] to the Gospel tunes," the little pamphlet was dedicated to his "blessed memory . . . [for he] well deserved the title of 'The St. Paul of the Nez Perces,' given him by Miss S.L. McBeth." The thirty-one chosen

form a collection of those popular turn-of-the-century hymns, personal and sentimental. There is a large percentage devoted to temptation, backsliding, and forgiveness: *Yield Not to Temptation*, *Whiter Than Snow*, *God Loved the World of Sinners Lost*, *We Have Disobeyed Jehovah*, *Jehovah Sees Our Thoughts and Deeds*. The only secular song is *My Country, 'Tis of The*; appropriately the last one is *When the Roll is Called up Yonder*.

Not long after the hymnals had been distributed among the churches, another suggestion came to Kate. Should she not as the one with the longest service compile a record of the Nez Perce Mission? Many friends and supporters joined in urging her to undertake this history. One of those most insistent was Miss Julia Fraser, field secretary of the Pacific Coast Women's Board of Home Missions, who had visited Kate in Lapwai and now she took the suggestion to Mr. W.M. Ladd of Portland. Long a friend of Sue's and Kate's, Mr. Ladd readily agreed to pay the expenses of publication. When Kate at first demurred that she was not an author, that it was too much to undertake at her age, her old Wellsville childhood friend, A.J. Ralston, wrote:

My dear friend, it is an obligation to her [Sue] that you make this record.¹⁷

Once again Kate realized that here was an opportunity for dutiful family loyalty to her sister's memory. Slowly from her old faded JOURNAL with many a pang of regret, Kate copied into a companion notebook long, finely-penned pages that became THE NEZ PERCES SINCE LEWIS AND CLARK. Mr. Ladd sent his secretary from Portland to help Kate put her reminiscences in order for the press. The thought of the book's being published in Chicago had not occurred to Kate, who had taken for granted that Mr. Ladd only wished to deposit the account in the Oregon Historical Society, now becoming established in Portland. Kate so effaced herself in telling of Sue's exploits in her history that it is extremely difficult to cull out Kate's contribution in those early years, when the sisters were together in the mission. Kate found it was "not easy to get much reliable history" for "that indefinite, misty period" of the early Nez Percés, thus setting the pattern for the whole book. Her own early years now were becoming "misty" and sometimes confused too on exact dates, so she built the account on jumbled events that suited her story-telling

purpose of the mission growth. Generally, she attempted to screen names with generalities to avoid offending her Nez Perce friends. In an appendix she included some of the Nez Perce traditions and myths she had gathered from Uncle Billy for Miss Fletcher's study. Nevertheless, with patient adjustment and piecing together of facts from Kate's original JOURNAL, church records, extant letters, and contemporary news accounts, *THE NEZ PERCES SINCE LEWIS AND CLARK* ultimately stands as a reliable source of information for the last crucial quarter of the 19th century on the Nez Perce Reservation. It is one of the first books published that concerned itself exclusively with events in the state of Idaho, then not twenty years old.¹⁸

Mr. Ladd arranged that the book be brought out by the Revell Publishing Company, which agreed after a specified number of copies were sold, to pay Kate in royalties 7½¢ a copy. When the crisp new books were delivered in 1908, the picture of good old elder "Uncle Billy" Williams adorned the jacket, not that of his more famous son, Sue's favorite. Many copies were inscribed by Kate for her Nez Perce friends, in whose families they have long been cherished. Although Mr. Ladd had to guarantee the costs of publication, Kate's book went into a second edition, and Kate or the mission eventually received the royalties. Today it is a prized collector's item among western books. It was in appreciation of her efforts that Kate received from her now feeble old friend, A.J. Ralston, a note:

My dear darling friend, your book — you must know, is the record of your own sweet, beautiful life . . . I must say good night, but I felt I must have this little talk.¹⁹

Did the "dear, darling friend" take some of the sting and hurt from Kate's heart after all these years and the memories of that St. Louis week so many years ago?

Kate's work on Sue's "consecrated life among the Nez Perces"²⁰ had immeasurably broadened her own life in research, correspondence, and travel. From the early days, the McBeths had travelled to Presbyteries and even to Synods, culminating in the notable one in Moscow, when for the first time the invitation included: "Brethren, bring your wives along; we will provide for your camp." More than thirty ministers, elders, and wives accompanied Kate, whose "hack . . . was told to take the lead . . .

[through] the university town . . . such a procession of spring wagons," purchased with the government's recent payment.²¹ But now bolstered by Maizie's youthful enthusiasm and always accompanied by her, Kate did more traveling in the last ten years of her life than she had during the previous twenty under Sue's restrictions. The summer she was completing the manuscript of the book she was in California, where she undoubtedly visited "my old friend in San Francisco," who had provided the funds for Kate and Maizie to attend the Lewis and Clark Centennial Exposition in Portland.²²

Regarded as a pioneer in the Nez Perce Mission Field and "an authority on the history and traditions of the tribe,"²³ Kate was also in demand as a speaker. In 1901, she was invited to address the women at General Assembly and again in 1909, when it met at Denver.²⁴ A "hale and active" eighty-year-old, Kate was interviewed at the Synod of Washington meeting at Vancouver. She was accompanied not only by the ever solicitous Maizie but also on this trip by "several full-blood Nez Perce Indians . . . who have been trained by her." Kate talked of her book's recent publication and of her future plans for other articles. The interview concludes with the assertion that Miss McBeth has since 1879

remained with the tribe that loves, honors and respects her for her self-sacrificing work among them.²⁵

Ever since that crucial year of 1897, Kate with many of the Nez Perces had been deeply concerned over the fate of the Presbyterian Fourth camp meeting. At that time, a Camp Meeting Association had been formed by the Christian Nez Perces. As the impulsive Reverend Hedges had noted, the agency never again officially sponsored such a wild "heathen display." After the decisive separation of Christians and heathens into two camps at Lapwai, when "the two parties in the tribe were created," for several years the pagan group continued to hold its own celebration. But it wasn't long until the non-Christians disagreed among themselves and divided again, one group meeting near the old Lapwai Fort, the other on the banks of the Clearwater. For a few more years the two heathen camps met annually, but eventually the Nez Perces lost interest and control. The celebration was gradually taken over largely by those

troublesome "wild whites," who wished to recapture the by-gone days of rough pioneer living with the vicarious thrills of simulated "Injun fightin.'" There were "wild white" settlements in the hinterlands of central Idaho that had long ago dispensed with even the pretence of partriotic orations. Throughout the former Nez Perce land the Fourth celebrations could be reported as the LEWISTON TELLER did:

The boys in Warrens had a big time on the Fourth with horse racing, jollification, and a few fights.²⁶

Freed from the "heathen elements," the Nez Perce Presbyterians renewed their efforts to reinstate the oldfashioned church-centered Fourth camp meeting and revival services. For some twelve years these Christian festivities were rotated among the six Indian congregations: two at Kamiah, one each at Spalding, North Fork, Alder Creek, and Meadow Creek. Gradually a pattern evolved for the two-week gatherings. Each day had three church services: the morning, devoted to the children and young people, usually was concluded before the noon recess with a sermon which the adults attended. Two more sermons were delivered, one at two in the afternoon, the other early in the evening. On the Fourth itself, always a day of particular significance, the traditional feast was held after the oration.

The seventh annual Fourth camp meeting was held at the Meadow Creek Church, where Miss Julia Fraser visited in 1904 and reported her first experience at a typical Nez Perce celebration:

Tent-poles, pasture and wood are provided by the hostess church . . . the people bring their own tents, bedding and food . . . It was an inspiring sight the evening the Lapwai people came over the hills to Meadow Creek. These Indians are very courteous and polite, and every little particular is carefully planned. When they camped for lunch, a spokesman was elected, who . . . responded to the greetings given by the head of the Meadow Creek delegation.

She told of the two days these travelers "had been . . . on the road . . . hot and dusty and quite late." They were both hungry and tired, and yet

there was no undue haste or hurry or rush. No one broke line, but each waited for their assigned place.

After the tents had been pitched in a great circle with "the wagons drawn up . . . back of them," the horses were all collected, "a great bunch . . . at least five hundred" and driven "to a fine pasture several miles off."

Miss Fraser describes the meetings: "a weirdness and beauty about [the singing] which cannot be described;" the communion service, Christian Endeavor, Sunday School, temperance service; "the great feast on the fifth, when the Indians entertained over six hundred people at an elaborate a banquet as I ever attended." The visitor concluded her account with a contrast to the heathen camp at Lapwai: "the lines are drawn very sharply between the heathen and Christian Indians."²⁷

Although these gatherings, moving locations from church to church every year, were generally well attended, the various sites left much to be desired. Just the inconvenience and danger from theft of the horses driven "several miles off" for pasture was enough to make the Nez Perces desire a permanent place. Thus it was that after many years of wandering in the wilderness the Christian Nez Perces' Fourth of July camp meeting came to their promised land.

Since his arrival in Idaho as Synodical Missionary, the Reverend D. O. Ghormley had often discussed with the leading churchmen their difficulties in conducting their Fourth "testimonial meetings" at a new place every year. In 1909, he urged the Nez Perces to seek out a suitable place on their tribal mountain reserve away from the "wild whites."²⁸

One minister and one elder from each of the six Indian Presbyterian churches set out in quest of "The Place." Accompanied by their wives and the usual crowd of helpers, the camping party spent an entire week in the late spring after the snows were melted searching for the ideal location. They visited many suggested places keeping always carefully in mind their requirements for this site: high enough altitude above the hot river valleys for pleasant summer temperatures; a sufficient and good water supply; plenty of pasture for four or five hundred horses; a well-shaded, comfortably level area for the erection of

many tents; a conveniently near wood lot for fuel. Holding early morning worship each day before breaking camp, the committee took their responsibilities seriously. At twilight around their dying campfire their voices drifted across the chilly prairie in one of their favorite 'Pentecostal Hymns': "There will be no Sorrow There" or "Bringing in the Sheaves."

After thoroughly considering and inspecting many locations, they returned and recommended an area south of Mason Butte on Camas Prairie. In addition to meeting the prerequisites it was located roughly half way between the two chief settlements of the tribe, Kamiah and Lapwai. When the decision was announced in their churches on the Sabbath following the trip, one of the older men said:

Oh, I'm glad it is at Talmaks for there are such sweet smelling things: vines, flowers and shrubbery there.²⁹

In true orderly Nez Perce fashion, a Camp Meeting Board was immediately established of twenty-four members. There was much to be done in preparation that first year for the formal opening. Many posts were cut to fence the 649 acres of fine pasture and a few rough storage sheds were erected for supplies. The first chairman, James Hayes, served for almost twenty years until his death in 1928. A regular schedule was set up for the organization of the camp each June.

a couple of days of good hard work before the meetings open, putting up the large worship tent, and putting in the seats that have been piled up in a shed since the last year . . . straw to be brought from neighboring farms to make beds . . . [a] piano rented from a white settler.³⁰

The reverse procedure had to be just as carefully carried out at the conclusion of each year's season: the borrowed equipment returned, the grounds cleaned and left in order with everything closed up tightly against the onslaught of the long, severe prairie winter, hungry coyotes or timber wolves, and possible white marauders. In a few years some rough cabins were built by individual families.

That first year, 1910, the huge worship tent had to be borrowed. During the week the men cut sufficient wood to tide them over Sunday, when no labor was allowed in camp. The annual sunrise service was literal, at 3:50, "not when the sun has

been up two hours."³¹ The traditional Fourth dinner was free to all comers, announced early in the morning by

an Indian shouting, riding on a horse, well dressed, with a long ribbon hanging down on his breast (red, white and blue of course) and little flags on his horse's head.³²

All night long, teams of young trusted Nez Perce men took shifts in guarding the camp "to keep out bootleggers and drunken men."³³

Maizie Crawford with her "high, clear and absolutely true soprano voice" had for almost fifteen years trained the Nez Perce³⁴ singers. Kate, who had never been able to carry a tune, believed that the Lord had worked a miracle for her to be able to start

the Sweet Solemn Thought in S.S. today . . . I can hardly believe it is myself singing after spending the most of my life so singless and how much melody has been made in my heart here.³⁵

Although both Kate and Sue had brought organs for their mission work, they were neither one ever able to give real leadership in music. Added to their own inability was the Nez Perce custom of "shrilly chanting," of making "a gruesome sound . . . in reddy notes."³⁶ Starting in with the young people in Christian Endeavor, Maizie soon found herself in demand as director of music for all their events. Tuneless or not, how the Nez Perces loved to sing! Kate "believed the Nez Perces had had the Gospel fairly sung into them." They literally wore out hymnals, especially those sent from Illinois. As long as Miss Crawford directed music at Lapwai every account of visitors emphasizes the remarkable singing that the Nez Perces contributed to the Talmaks services, the result of their year-in and year-out rehearsals.³⁷

It was a great joy to Kate to occupy at Talmaks a cozy little one-room cottage with a fire place of rough stones. During her life time, the original pattern of three daily meetings continued. Classes for the children and young people, Christian Endeavor, choir rehearsals, Bible study, and women's missionary gatherings were regularly scheduled for each season. The testimonial meetings, in which the older people enjoyed participating, was a high light. A day devoted to Temperance came to carry more

importance because "little towns of white people had sprung up . . . many of them godless . . . always putting up some ungodly counter attraction."³⁸ To the McBeths one of the most insidious and alarming of these "ungodly counter attractions" was the liquor traffic, bootlegging in defiance of the law on former Nez Perce land.

Serious thoughtful citizens still composed a small fraction of the earliest pioneers, but from the beginning these few agreed with the church workers that liquor was a threat to the Indian community. From their strict Scottish childhood days, the McBeths had always considered the Demon Rum one of their chief adversaries. Sue had been in Idaho scarcely two years before she established a Temperance Society at the 1876 Kamiah July Fourth camp meeting. Now well into her seventies, Kate was appalled to find her Nez Perce work threatened by the Liquor Forces. Most of the Indians were honest, conscientious, and plodding unless they had been drinking. They were generally frugal and sensible and reasonable with their money except when they began buying the "wild whites' fire water."

The McBeths always thrived on crises. The first liquor skirmish occurred in 1905, when the Circuit Court of Appeals, sitting in San Francisco, ruled that since Indians now were U.S. citizens, it was illegal to limit their freedom to purchase liquor. Practically over night, some thirty saloons sprang up in Nez Perce county, open for business. It took two and a half years of appeals to reach the U.S. Supreme Court, which reinstated the original clause making it a federal offense to sell intoxicating liquor to Indians. As soon as the final ruling reached Lapwai, "our good Sup't. O.H. Lipps" gave a peremptory order to the saloon keepers "to get out at once." They were forced to close their businesses and leave the reservation before they could make a profitable settlement and turn to bootlegging. Nevertheless, in time bootleggers did penetrate the reservation so that Mr. Lipps imported the famous anti-liquor crusader, "Pussyfoot" Johnson. Masquerading as a purchaser of Indian land, W.E. Johnson secured enough evidence to enable law enforcement officers in one night's simultaneous raids on seven locations to make wholesale arrests of Nez Perce and "wild white" men.

But evil could not be so easily thwarted. According to the

missionaries, the "liquor men" succeeded in gerrymandering a new county. They created Lewis County by taking slices from the two fairly equal-sized counties, Clearwater and Nez Perce. Clearwater included the rich mining and timber land. Lewis county was given the "finest grain raising" and Camas Prairie. Thus Nez Perce county was left with the "smallest possible" territory, consisting chiefly of Lewiston, which the "wets" dominated, and the Lapwai-Sweetwater area of the Indian Agency. In this manoeuver the white women at Lapwai could clearly trace the machinations of the Devil himself. During these distressing developments, Kate and Maizie were delighted to welcome again Elizabeth Crawford, who returned to Idaho to help her sister care for their aging aunt.

By 1914, the "wet forces" of Lewiston, confident of victory now with the new restricted county lines, demanded another local option vote. The aroused missionaries were certain that the election board had been hand-picked by the liquor interests, for it was rumored that all Indians were going to be turned away from the voting booths. The approaching battle called forth all the instincts of the McBeth family's fighting Scotch ancestry. They were encouraged by the support of the "good white farmer folk," indignant over their tax raise from the recent county division, and apprehensive over the effect of open saloons on their Indian neighbors. Even during the busy spring planting season, many of them joined in helping to register the Nez Perces, to "write their names."

Backed by Kate's example in the past, the Crawford sisters first appealed to all the church members, especially through the women's societies. As Kate had been forced to do years before, reach the men through their wives, so the same approach was used now. The McBeth women made sample ballots and spent hours indoctrinating and training the women where and how to mark the correct "X" in exactly the right square of the confusing ballot. The Nez Perce women needed no urging toward prohibition for far too many of them had suffered abuse from wild, half-crazy, drunken fathers or husbands. One old woman had been put "through the form of voting so often" that afterwards she said,

I wasn't a bit troubled when I went in to vote; I think I

could have done it in my sleep.

Long and fervent prayers went up day and night from the little Spalding Presbyterian Church; a day-long prayer meeting was carefully planned for the actual date of the election.

When the fateful day arrived, the "good white people" rallied to the support of the Nez Perces and their missionaries, packing the "rink . . . to see that the Indians got justice." There was a long line of Indians waiting to be admitted when the polls opened. The first three Indians were refused ballots, but the long line moved up "to compel refusal in every case . . . showing a good deal of the old fighting spirit in their faces." While the Indians delayed all procedures by trying to register with their Nez Perce names and refusing to use English, demanding an interpreter, the tension mounted in the crowded rink. The Nez Perces began shouting encouragement and directions to each other in their own language. Not understanding a word of Nez Perce, the election board was drowned in a deafening Sea of Babel. In the midst of this excited hub-bub, Dr. Alley, "our good government physician" pounded for the attention of the excited mob. The clamor ceased and in the sudden ominous silence the doctor read a message from the prosecuting attorney. All Indians over twenty-one who were properly registered and were citizens were eligible to vote. Led by the "good whites . . . applause shook the rafters."

The first three Indians who had been refused went back to vote. The election board refused permission either to the missionaries or to the trained Nez Perce women to help the illiterate mark their ballots. But they could not prevent the Nez Perces shouting directions to each other in their own tongue. In Miss Crawford's judgment the Indians were not frightened by all the "wild whites'" bluster but "I think they were rather enjoying the fight." If the Indians enjoyed the fight, Kate exulted in the triumph. She remained right "down in the middle of the muddle" of the rink's excitement until noon, when she had to give up from exhaustion to return home in prayerful jubilation.

By nine that evening, the suspense was over: Nez Perce county was to stay a "dry county." The Nez Perces and their friends, "the good white people . . . [who] encouraged them . . . to believe more in humanity," had defeated the wet forces by a vote of 880

to 661. When the chagrined Lewiston paper reported the results of the vote, it correctly diagnosed the women and Indians as responsible for the outcome and intimated that perhaps neither group should have suffrage. This local option vote established the fact once and for all that Indians in Idaho are legal voters.³⁹

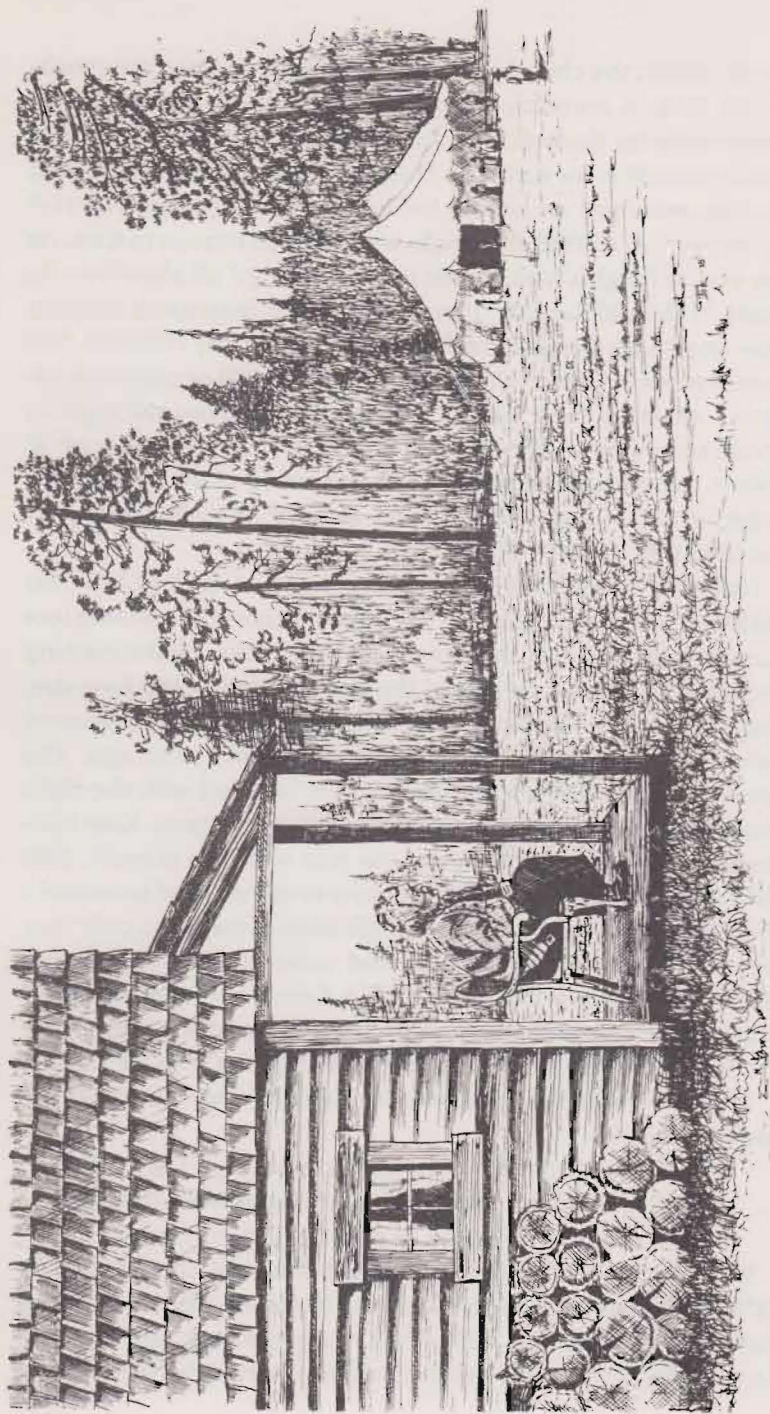
The hot July of 1915 at Talmaks was a taste of heaven to Kate, on the cooler heights with "sweet smelling things" all about her. So many of the old Kamiah friends were there, their small children now grown up bringing to her proudly their shy children. The meetings were "filled with spirit . . . perhaps 800 people with 100 tents." Maizie's choir had by now become famous throughout Presbyterianism in the Northwest. That year the choir of 37 voices, accompanied by a Nez Perce band of 14 instruments drew visitors from miles around to hear the closing night's cantata, *THE PASSOVER*.⁴⁰

From her small front stoop, barely large enough to hold her rocking chair, Kate could see the imposing new big meeting tent dominating the whole camp area. As Kate rocked in the evening shadows, too weary to attend the last meeting of the long day, the voices of the Nez Percés filled the dusk with hymns, the same hymns she had taught them more than thirty years ago. The reverend murmuring from the big tent blended with the night sounds of birds rustling through the tall ponderosas. Kate half-dozed, confusing memories of the past with the present. Elias Pond, Enoch's nephew, had just been ordained, and sometimes she called him Enoch. True his ordination brought to only four the number of her pupils who had entered God's ministry — Mark Arthur, James Dickson, and E.J. Conner — maybe, there'd still be time to match Sue's record of ten. And then there were the many women and those precious children — Kate slept.

After their return to the hot, dry Lapwai valley, Maizie wrote back home that

Aunt Kate stood the trip to Talmaks just fine and has said several times since, 'Oh, it seems so lonesome and quiet down here now; I would like to be back at Talmaks.'⁴¹

But when Kate fell asleep for the last time that fall, October 29, 1915, it was not back to Talmaks with its majestic pines that they took her "plain Scotch body." She was buried next to Sue in the bare Kamiah grave yard behind the little church she had loved so



well. Here Kate came into complete understanding with her Nez Perces, and here she rests with them all around her. Her marker, smaller and less conspicuous than that of Sue, as her life was, carries no scripture, only the bare facts of her birth and death, and the notation:

Presbyterian Missionary
To the Nez Perce Indians
1879-1915

NOTES

Chapter 1

- ¹ Sue McBeth to Dr. William Dulles [no month, day], 1892: "With God's help and the help of this strong Scotch will he gives me I did not miss a day from the school room, though it took all my strength."
- ² *Fairfield, Ledger*, July 28, 1924: "she had a queenly bearing."
- ³ Clifford M. Drury, *Henry Harmon Spalding*. (Caldwell, Idaho: The Caxton Printers, 1936). p. 288.
- ⁴ Colin B. Goodgykoontz, *Home Missions on the American Frontier*, (Caldwell, Idaho: The Caxton Printers, 1939). pp. 221-237.
- ⁵ Jane Gay, "Choup-Nit-Ki" [MS. Cambridge, Mass.: The Women's Archives, Radcliffe College] Washington, D.C., 1895; Vol. I, p. 12.
- ⁶ Clifford M. Drury, *Henry Harmon Spalding*, p. 416; John B. Monteith to John Urich, February 11, 1876: "Miss McBeth taught school one year and lived at my house for a long time in Lapwai; if she had been so hard to get along with, I think I would have found it out."
- ⁷ Clifford M. Drury, *First White Women over the Rockies*, 3 vols. (Glendale, California: Arthur H. Clark Co., 1963). Robert M. Loughridge to Dr. John C. Lowrie, July 11, 1842: "I have for several years been looking for a missionary wife, but I have not yet found her. It would not, I think, be difficult to get some pious woman to unite with me in the work but as much of the success of the mission will depend upon her character and qualifications, I am anxious to do that which will be most for the glory of God."
- ⁸ Clifford M. Drury, *First White Women over the Rockies*, Vol. II, p. 327: The Reverend and Mrs. Elkanah Walker's six children were born between December 7, 1838, and December 31, 1847.
- ⁹ Henry T. Cowley to John C. Lowrie, May 11, 1872.
- ¹⁰ Sue McBeth to Rev. H.H. Spalding, May, 1874.
- ¹¹ *Ibid.*
- ¹² Jane Gay, *Choup-Nit-Ki*, vol. I, p. 24.
- ¹³ Albert Britt, *Great Indian Chiefs* (New York: McGraw-Hill, 1938). p. 258.
- ¹⁴ Sue McBeth to Rev. F.F. Ellinwood, February 10, 1886.
- ¹⁵ Charles Monteith to John D. Atkins, July 21, 1885.
- ¹⁶ Sue McBeth to Rev. H.H. Spalding, May, 1874.
- ¹⁷ John B. Monteith to Edward P. Smith, Janaury 6, 1874.
- ¹⁸ O.O. Howard, *Nez Perce Joseph*, (Boston, Mass.: Lee & Shepard, 1881). p. 17.
- ¹⁹ *Ibid.*, pp. 23-24.

- 20 Sue McBeth to Wellsville [Ohio] family, December 3, 1874.
- 21 Francis Haines, *The Nez Perces*, (Norman, Oklahoma: University of Oklahoma Press, 1955). p. 303. John B. Monteith to Dr. A.L. Lindsley, January 23, 1874: Sue was "an excellent and zealous Christian Lady, but totally unqualified by feeble health to discharge anything more than hear lessons of the pupils, and that exhausts her strength."
- 22 Gay, *Choup-Nit-Ki*, vol. I, pp. 78, 241.
- 23 *Ibid.*, vol. I, p. 51.
- 24 *Ibid.*, vol. I, pp. 67, 71.
- 25 John B. Monteith to Rev. J.C. Lowrie, March 6, 1874: Mr. Spalding "occupies the largest and best house" in Kamiah. *Ibid.*, June 27, 1874: "I have found it necessary to use one of the rooms in Mr. Spalding's house in Kamiah for Miss McBeth. He has more room than he can occupy. Being queer in his notions he may find fault."
- 26 Gay, *Choup-Nit-Ki*, vol. I, p. 55.
- 27 Sue McBeth to John C. Lowrie, July 3, 1879.
- 28 Gay, *Choup-Nit-Ki*, vol. I, p. 83.
- 29 Sue McBeth to Wellsville [Ohio] family, December 4, 1874.
- 30 Clifford M. Drury, *A Teepee in His Front Yard*, (Portland, Oregon: Binford & Mort, 1949). p. 110.
- 31 Undated Wellsville scrapbook clipping, newspaper article: "How Shall I Begin to Work."
- 32 Kate McBeth *The Nez Perces Since Lewis and Clark*, (New York: F.H. Revell Co., 1908). p. 115.
- 33 H.T. Cowley to H.H. Spalding, October 21, 1873.
- 34 Undated Wellsville scrapbook, newspaper article [undated].
- 35 Kate McBeth, *Journal*, 2 vols [MS in possession of authors]; p. 94.
- 36 Sue McBeth to Dr. J.C. Lowrie, April 3, 1875.
- 37 J.C. Lowrie to George Ainslie, May 10, 1874.
- 38 John B. Monteith to Edward P. Smith, June 30, 1874, listed the following salaries: Teacher, Rev. S.N.D. Martin \$850; Carpenter, B. Canter \$1000; Sup't. Farming, C.E. Monteith \$1000; Farmer, Perrin Whitman \$1000; Miller G.W. Swank \$1050; Tinner and Gunsmith, Peter Stagg \$850.
- 39 *The Foreign Missionary*, November, 1880.
- 40 Sue McBeth to Dr. J.C. Lowrie, April 3, 1875.
- 41 Sue McBeth to Rev. T.M. Boyd, May 12, 1887.
- 42 Mrs. Mary Axtell Rumsey to Kate McBeth, November 8, 1899.
- 43 Sue McBeth to Rev. F.F. Ellinwood, February 27, 1886.
- 44 Mary M. Crawford, *The Nez Perces Since Spalding*, (Philadelphia, Penna., Presbyterian Press, 1936). p. 11.
- 45 O.O. Howard, *Nez Perce Joseph*, p. 31: "I think it a great mistake to take from Joseph and his band of Nez Perces that valley [Wallowa]."

- ⁴⁶ Sue McBeth to Wellsville [Ohio] family, November, 1874.
- ⁴⁷ "Memorial of William C. Ralston" (1826-1875), *The Daily Alta*, Alta, California, 1875.
- ⁴⁸ M. Alfreda Elsensohn, *Pioneer Days in Idaho County*, 2 vols. (Caldwell, Idaho: Caxton Printers, 1951). p. 129: Henry Hart Spalding founded the first Grange in Idaho and built one of the first Grange Halls in the Northwest in Grangeville.
History of North Idaho (Chicago, 1903). p. 418: Grangeville owes its origin to this building because Loyal B. Brown refused land for it in Mt. Idaho; Mr. Brown was "a man of many virtues, did not want the hall within the limits of the town."
- ⁴⁹ *Presbyterian Banner*, January 17, 1877, p. 21.
- ⁵⁰ John B. Monteith to Edward P. Smith, November 28, 1873.
- ⁵¹ *Ibid.*, December 12, 1873.
Ibid., July 4: 1874: "one Chinaman was convicted of selling liquor to the Indians. It is an easy matter to convict a Chinaman, but it is hard to get testimony that will satisfy the jury to convict a white man."
- ⁵² Sue McBeth to Wellsville [Ohio] family, April 11, 1860.
- ⁵³ Laufe, Abe, ed., *An Army Doctor's Wife on the Frontier*, (Pittsburgh, Penna., University of Pittsburgh Press, 1962). pp. 220-221.
- ⁵⁴ Kate McBeth, *The Nez Perces Since Lewis and Clark*, p. 83: Chief Lawyer, Solomon Whitman, Jonathan Williams — Kamiah, 1874. Timothy and his brothers Levi, Lot, and Jude — Lapwai, 1876

Chapter 2

- ¹ McBeth, *The Nez Perces Since Lewis and Clark*, pp. 234-235.
- ² Laufe, ed., *An Army Doctor's Wife on the Frontier*, pp. 237, 239, 246.
- ³ Cheshire Giff, *Thunder on the Mountain*, (New York: Doubleday, 1960). p. 34.
- ⁴ Laufe, ed., *An Army Doctor's Wife on the Frontier*, pp. 249-250.
- ⁵ Ethel E. Redfield, *Reminiscences of Francis Mylon Redfield*, (Caldwell, Idaho: Caxton Prints, 1949). p. 99.
- ⁶ *Who Was Who in America*, vol. 1, p. 594.
- ⁷ McBeth, *The Nez Perces Since Lewis and Clark*, p. 160: "They [the Nez Perces] call General Howard . . . 'Ah-tin-moot' (without an arm.)"
- ⁸ Howard, *Nez Perce Joseph*, pp. 14, 35, 63.
- ⁹ *Advance*, June 14, 1877.
- ¹⁰ Redfield, *Reminiscences of Francis Mylon Redfield*, pp. 90, 99, 100, 104. NinePipes "who was a friend of mine, yet a Non-treaty . . . afterwards joined the hostiles."
- ¹¹ Howard, *Nez Perce Joseph*, p. 125.
- ¹² McBeth, *The Nez Perces Since Lewis and Clark*, p. 92: "Miss S.L. McBeth shortly afterwards gave to each of the forty guards a memento of her gratitude in the shape of a picture. Years afterwards when I [Kate] entered their little oneroom houses, I knew by these pictures that I was in the home of one of her guards."

¹³ Howard, *Nez Perce Joseph*, p. 129: "The time from the first news of the terrible disaster at White Bird Canyon till the morning of the 22nd of June seemed long indeed. It appears long even in retrospect. Still it was only four days."

¹⁴ The proprietor and managing editor of the *Advance* published in Chicago was Charles Henry Howard, General Howard's younger brother, "Charlie."

Chapter 3

¹ Dr. Lowrie's edict from Philadelphia denied Sue ever seeing Mrs. Sibley again, the widow of Major George Champlain Sibley (1782-1863). Mrs. Sibley had much in common with Sue because she and her husband, an early Indian agent, had had experience with southwestern Indians. Not only was Mrs. Sibley sympathetic toward the Indians' plight but also with "advanced ideas" she was one of the earliest avowed advocates of woman's suffrage. With a fortune inherited from her distinguished father, Rufus B. Eaton of St. Louis, Mrs. Sibley was in a position to give substantial financial backing to any project that enlisted her interest. This Sue knew well from her St. Louis experience. Two years later Sue wrote to Dr. Lowrie (August 27, 1879) that she believed that Mrs. Sibley cut her out of her will because she died "believing that Sue loved the Nez Perces more than she did her." Instead of Sue inheriting some of Mrs. Sibley's bountiful wealth, at her death all her holdings and the handsome estate in St. Charles, Missouri, was willed to the founding and support of Lindenwood College for Women.

² Abe Laufe, (ed.), *An Army Doctor's Wife on the Frontier*, p. 295.

³ *The Advance*, June 14, 1877.

⁴ C.T. Stranahan, *Pioneer Stories*, (Idaho Writers' League, Lewiston, 1947). p. 44.

⁵ John C. Lowrie to Sue McBeth, November 6, 1878.

⁶ John C. Lowrie to John Monteith, February 13, 1878.

⁷ *Ibid.*, February 2, 1879.

⁸ John Monteith to Sue McBeth, November 1, 1878.

⁹ Gay, *Choup-Nit-Ki*, vol. 2, pp. 396f.

¹⁰ Deward E. Walker, Jr., "Ipnu. Cililpt Movement," *A Survey of Nez Perce Religion*, (New York: United Presbyterian Church in the U.S.A., 1964), p. 9f.

¹¹ McBeth, *The Nez Perces Since Lewis and Clark*, p. 156: "Our people used to worship the sun as our father and the earth as our mother." Many observers in testifying to the Nez Perces' superiority among northwestern Indians have not realized that much of their development depended not only upon their horses but also upon the fertile area in which they had lived in comparative peace for generations. Washington Irving, *The Adventures of Captain Bonneville U.S.A., in the Rocky Mountains and the Far West*, (New York: G.P. Putnam's Sons, 1843). pp. 131-132: "The only excesses indulged in by this temperate and exemplary people, appear to have been gambling and horseracing." *Tsceminiun*, (Lewiston, Idaho: Idaho Writers' League, 1964). p. 40: "Captain Meriweather Lewis . . . to the time 1806 . . . [states] these horses are superior to the best in Virginia" and . . . "his co-Captain, William Clark . . . [noted that they were] large, active, well-formed, and fleet of foot."

¹² McBeth, *The Nez Perces Since Lewis and Clar*, p. 239.

- ¹³ *Tsceminium*, p. 42.
- ¹⁴ McBeth, *The Nez Perces Since Lewis and Clark*, pp. 256-272.
- ¹⁵ Walker, *op. cit.*, p. 1.
- ¹⁶ McBeth, *The Nez Perces Since Lewis and Clark*, p. 238.
- ¹⁷ Gay, *Choup-Nit-Ki*, vol. II, p. 395. McBeth, *The Nez Perces Since Lewis and Clark*, p. 156.
- ¹⁸ Sue McBeth to Dr. A.L. Lindsley, May 27, 1886.
- ¹⁹ Sue McBeth to Dr. E.F. Ellinwood, July 12, 1887.
- ²⁰ *Ibid.*, December 12, 1887.
- ²¹ Sue McBeth to Rev. J.C. Lowrie, March 31, 1884. Sue McBeth to Dr. F.F. Ellinwood, December 12, 1887. Kate McBeth, *Journal*, vol. I, September 3, 1880: "The people seem to love the Lawyers." Kate McBeth, *Journal*, vol. I, Christmas, 1879; December 8, 1886; March 8, 1887. C.T. Stranahan, *Pioneer Stories*, (Lewiston, Idaho: Idaho Writers' League, 1947). p. 6.
- ²² McBeth, *Journal*, vol. I, February 29, 1886.
- ²³ McBeth, *The Nez Perces Since Lewis and Clark*, pp. 198-199. McBeth, *Journal*, vol. II, pp. 74-75.
- ²⁴ E. Paul Hovey, *Presbyterian Yesterdays*, (Palouse, Washington: Palouse Republic, 1964). p. 7.
- ²⁵ McBeth, *The Nez Perces Since Lewis and Clark*, pp. 92-93.

Chapter 4.

- ¹ Daniel J. Ryan, *History of Ohio*, (Columbus, Ohio: 1888). p. 121: South of Steubenville, at Mt. Pleasant in the neighborhood of Wellsville [Ohio] in 1817 "the first newspaper in the United States advocating the abolition of slavery was published by a Quaker, Charles Osburn." From the pulpits of the "Quakers, Scotch-Irish Presbyterians, Methodists, and Baptists" throughout the impressionable years of the McBeths' childhood it was thundered that slavery was "a moral atrocity to religious people."
- ² *History of the Presbyterian Church of Sewickley, Pennsylvania*, (New York, 1914). pp. 36-37: "Keel-boatmen . . . a pretty rough population . . . on these Western rivers worked on a keel-boat that was . . . framed like an ordinary boat, with a cabin on it, and on the outside of the cabin was a little walk with cleats on it, so that a man could stand up and pole. Well, poling up-stream was mighty hard work, and the men were a pretty hard lot. They were like the raftmen who came down the Allegheny in my boyhood . . . those keel-boatmen were a rough gang. They were not the kind of people to build up a church."
- ³ "McBeth Family Scrapbook" [Presbyterian Historical Society - Philadelphia, Penn] Privately typed account by Susan Bough, 1936, granddaughter of Alexander and Mary McBeth. Alexander was said to be "possessed of the sterling traits so characteristic of his race, and in addition he was distinguished for his gentleness." He had always prided himself on his reputation of his "keen discernment of character" and liked to fancy that he detected the same trait in Susan. At least he was always mindful to guide her into such experiences and habits as the opportunities presented themselves.

⁴ *Ibid.*

Occident, June 15, 1893 [obituary]: Doubters "were unable to bear up under her assaults and arguments. She both understood God's word, the Bible, and her text."

⁵ "McBeth Family Scrapbook," Susan Bough.

⁶ According to the McBeth Family tradition, the powder horn is on display.

⁷ Wilbur H. Siebert, *The Underground Railroad from Slavery to Freedom*, (New York: McMillan Co., 1898). pp. 37, 39, 40, 276-277. Facing page 113 is a map of the "Underground Routes to Canada" which lead directly through Wellsville, Ohio.

⁸ *Interior*, June 23, 1892.

⁹ *Northwest Presbyterian*, December 5, 1868.

¹⁰ *Iowa As It is in 1855* (Chicago, 1855).pp.52,60; p.84: "No one can travel up and down the Mississippi without being astonished at the immigration constantly moving into Iowa from all parts of the country, but especially from Indiana and Ohio."

Chapter 5

¹ Wilbur H. Siebert, *The Underground Railroad From Slavery to Freedom*, pp. 92, 95: "The people of Scotch and Scotch-Irish descent were naturally liberty loving, and seem to have given hearty support to the anti-slavery cause in whatever form it presented itself to them . . . All the various wings of Presbyterians . . . had representatives in this class of anti-slavery people. The sinfulness of slavery was a proposition that found uncompromising advocates among the Presbyterian ministers."

² Allen C. and Eleanor D. Morrill, "Launcelot Graham Bell," *Journal of Presbyterian History*, 40:4, (December, 1962). p. 225f: Launcelot Graham Bell had come from Virginia, called West by his Lord to found new churches to serve the settlers. He was a nineteenth century St. Paul. Although he began life as a Methodist, he was said to have founded twenty-eight Presbyterian churches in the south Iowa region. For a time he had been very successful with his flock in Fairfield, where a frame church was erected. A tolerant and warm man, he often shared his building with the Methodists, a convenient arrangement when he was away establishing and preaching in other small churches all the way from the Mississippi to the Missouri River. More of a dreamer than a financier his projects such as founding the Fairfield Female Seminary often went beyond the abilities of a struggling new community to support. In 1850 and 1851 he made two trips East to raise money for a new building to accommodate a congregation of nearly 300. He brought back a \$1000 to Fairfield with which to erect a brick church. The pious folk of the congregation then realized that for their handsome new edifice Father Bell was too old, too informal, and too much of an uncouth pioneer to occupy their pulpit. So he moved farther West still pioneering, leaving behind in Fairfield two institutions as his memorial, the church and the seminary.

³ J. F. Hinkhouse, *One Hundred Years of the Iowa Presbyterian Church*, (Cedar Rapids, Iowa: Lawrence Press, 1932). p. 219.

⁴ C.J. Fulton, "The Beginnings of Education in Iowa," *Iowa Journal of History and Politics*, (April, 1925). p. 294.

⁵ *Fairfield Ledger*, April 15, 1859: "we could not fail to notice again that the teacher [Sue McBeth] had educated the whole thinking powers, and not left the solution of principles to memory alone."

⁶ "Fairfield [Iowa] Presbyterian Church, 75th Anniversary Program," [MS Fairfield Public Library], 1916.

⁷ "Fairfield [Iowa] Presbyterian Church, Session Records, 1841-1860," [MS Fairfield Presbyterian Church]

⁸ McBeth, *Journal*, I, Thanksgiving, 1888.

⁹ Mrs. Mary E. Stranahan Smock to Kate McBeth, April 10, 1911.

¹⁰ "Sigourney [Iowa] Presbyterian Church Session Records, 1861." On March 27, 1861, Kate McBeth was dismissed to the Wellsville [Ohio] Presbyterian Church.

¹¹ *Fairfield Ledger*, April 15, 1859.

¹² McBeth, *The Nez Perces Since Lewis and Clark*, p. 84: Kate quotes a letter of Sue's dated 1858, but this is incorrect. Both McBeths frequently were inaccurate about dates; other supporting evidence corrects this error to 1859.

¹³ *Ibid.*, pp. 86-88.

¹⁴ *Ibid.*

¹⁵ Sue McBeth to Dr. P.S. Wilson, June 9, 1859.

¹⁶ Annual Report, *American Board of Commissioners for Foreign Missions*, 1859, p. 21.

¹⁷ Sue McBeth to Wellsville [Ohio] family, April 11, 1860.

¹⁸ Sue McBeth, "Goodwater, Journal," *The Chronicles of Oklahoma*, vol. VII, p. 430 (December, 1930).

¹⁹ Sue McBeth to Kate McBeth, August 1, 1860.

²⁰ Sue McBeth to Dr. P.S. Wilson, January 12, 1861.

²¹ *Fairfield Ledger*, July 28, 1924.

²² *History of Jefferson County, Iowa*, (Chicago: Western Historical Co., 1879): p. 438.

²³ *Ibid.*

²⁴ Sue McBeth to Wellsville [Ohio] family, August 4, 1862.

Chapter 6

¹ Lemuel Moss, *Annals of the United States Christian Commission*, (Chicago, 1867). p. 316: Missouri itself had between 20,000 and 50,000 troupes, the great majority of them passing through St. Louis.

² *Ibid.*, p. 65: "The ladies . . . received a nominal compensation, hardly sufficient to meet extra expenses, and sometimes that has gone for the purchase of delicacies for the sick."

³ *Ibid.*, p. 315.

⁴ "Souvenire Documents Bicentennial, 1764-1964," [MS St. Louis Historical Society], poster of the *Steamer Eagle*.

- ⁵ *Alton Evening Telegraph*, January 15, 1936, section 2, pp. 1-20.
- ⁶ *Ibid.*, p. 18: A year earlier soon after the first rebel prisoners were brought to Alton "seven surgeons were on restricted parole to the town."
- ⁷ *Ibid.*, p. 15.
- ⁸ *St. Louis Post Dispatch*, February 2, 1964: The Jefferson Barracks had been established in 1826 as an infantry school and basic training center but "in the Civil War was devoted to military hospital use." By the time Sue arrived, it was now an imposing compound rising on the west bank of the Mississippi. There were nine hospitals forming a semi-circle of about half a mile in diameter. The buildings were of one-storey, in triple rows, 600 feet long; each unit was divided into wards of 300 feet length.
History of Jefferson Barracks (Jefferson Barracks, Missouri, 1930). p. 19: "There were three groups or sets of these new hospital buildings some distance apart, the grounds in every direction being beautifully shaded by oak trees . . . They were so arranged that each group had the central row appropriated to a dining room and surgeons', nurses' and stewards' quarters."
- ⁹ McBeth, *The Nez Perces Since Lewis and Clark*, p. 228.
- ¹⁰ David Riddle Williams, *James Hall Brookes*, (St. Louis, Missouri: Buschart Bros., 1897). pp. 173-174.
- ¹¹ Edward P. Smith, "Incidents of the United States Christian Commission" pp. 445-446.
- ¹² Susan McBeth, *Seeds Scattered Broadcast*, (London, England, n.d.) p. 37.
- ¹³ *U.S. Christian Commission*, "Second Annual Report," 1863, p. 206.
- ¹⁴ *Alton Evening Telegraph*, January 15, 1936, p. 16.
- ¹⁵ Lemuel Moss, *Annals of the U.S. Christian Commission*, pp. 135, 651.
- ¹⁶ Sharf, J. Thomas, *History of St. Louis, Missouri* (Philadelphia, 1883) p. 16: Near the centre of the grounds was a neat and commodious chapel, where religious services were held. Attached to this, and occupying the vestibule, were a library and reading-room, the latter containing all the principal newspapers and periodicals of the country. There was also a branch library in each ward.
- ¹⁷ Keokuk County [Iowa] Court House Record's Office, Property Deeds: Susan and Kate McBeth bought Lot 3, Block No. 2, in Sigourney [Iowa] for \$125 from James & Lavinia Brown, April 28, 1859. Susan and Kate McBeth sold Lot 3, Block No. 2, in Sigourney [Iowa] to George D. Woodin, September 9, 1892 [no price given]. Susan and Kate McBeth bought 40 acres in Jasper County [Newton] Iowa, for \$160, September 9, 1892.
- ¹⁸ Sue McBeth to Wellsville [Ohio] family, August 4, 1862.
- ¹⁹ McBeth, *Seeds Scattered Broadcast*, p. 67.
- ²⁰ Sue McBeth to Wellsville [Ohio] family, August 4, 1862.
- ²¹ Edward P. Smith, "Incidents of the U.S. Christian Commission," pp. 445-446.
- ²² F.F. Byington to Kate McBeth, February 12, 1913.

Chapter 7

- ¹ "McBeth Family Scrapbook," newspaper clipping, no date, no heading.

² *Presbyterian Church, U.S., 1861-1914, "Ministerial Directory"* (Austin, Texas, 1942). James Hall Brookes: born Pulaski, Tennessee, February 27, 1830; married Susan Oliver, Oxford, Ohio, May 2, 1854; attended Miami University, Ohio. Pastures: 1854-'58, Dayton, Ohio; Second Presbyterian Church, 1858-'64, St. Louis, Missouri; Sixteenth St. Presbyterian Church, 1864-1897, St. Louis, Missouri. The Sixteenth Street Presbyterian Church became the Walnut St., then Washington and Compton, finally Memorial Presbyterian Church. In 1866 "owing to certain political action by the Northern General Assembly on the subject of slavery the church united in forming the Independent synod of Missouri." In 1874 a compromise enabled it to rejoin the northern Assembly. The Reverend Brookes edited "The Truth," 1875-1895; he was the author of over 200 Gospel Tracts and 17 books. He died April 18, 1897.

³ *McBeth, The Nez Perces Since Lewis and Clark*, p. 227: "A life long friendship existed between this city missionary [Sue McBeth] and Dr. Brooks. They had one heart on the subject of the second coming of Christ." James H. Brooks, ed., *The Truth* (St. Louis, Missouri: Charles E. Cox, 1880). vol. VI, p. 505: "It is quite certain that a simple reader of the Bible, entirely free from the control of traditional teaching, would see the second coming of Christ as plainly and fully set forth, as His first coming for the deliverance of His people from the curse of sin."

⁴ *Missouri Republican*, January 10, 1868.

⁵ *Ibid.*, January 6, 1868: "There is much destitution in the city this winter . . . various associations for the relief of the poor are taxed to their utmost." *Ibid.*, March 16, 1869: A thirteen-year old little girl was abandoned and half frozen to death before she was rescued and sent to the Home of the Refuge.

⁶ "McBeth Family Scrapbook" [MS]

⁷ *Ibid.*, "Home Report," unidentified newspaper clipping.

⁸ *McBeth, Journal I*, Second Sab. of 1881.

⁹ *Dictionary of American Biography* (New York, 1935). vol. XVII, p. 144: George Champlain Sibley.

¹⁰ Sue McBeth to D.L. Moody, February 5, 1869.

¹¹ Sue McBeth to Rev. John C. Lowrie, August 27, 1879.

¹² R.E. Doss, secretary of Grand Lodge Free and Accepted Masons, of Tennessee, personal letter, March 5, 1963, to authors.

¹³ "McBeth Family Scrapbook" [MS]

¹⁴ F.F. Ellinwood, "Three Heroines of the Nez Perces Missions" [privately printed pamphlet, no date; [Presbyterian Historical Society, Philadelphia, Pennsylvania].

¹⁵ Sue McBeth to H.H. Spalding, May, 1874.

Chapter 8

¹ Joseph H. Bausman, *History of Beaver County, Pennsylvania*, 2 vols. (New York: Knickerbocker Press, 1904). vol. II, p. 642.

² *Ibid.*, vol. II, p. 640: The Reverend David A. Cunningham was president of the Board of Trustees, 1861-1864.

- ³ *Ibid.*, vol. II, p. 960.
- ⁴ *History of Ellwood City, Pennsylvania*, 50th Anniversary, (Ellwood City, 1942).
- ⁵ Joseph H. Bausman, *History of Beaver County, Pennsylvania*, vol. II, p. 960: "Many of the children could not be housed with him [the Reverend Henry Webber], and were boarded about in the families of the neighborhood." *History of Ellwood City, Pennsylvania*; "at one time one hundred and five boys and girls were cared for."
- ⁶ "McBeth Family" collection, [Presbyterian Historical Museum, Philadelphia, Penna.]
- ⁷ Joseph H. Bausman, *History of Beaver County, Pennsylvania*, vol. II, p. 961: The Reverend Henry Webber was pastor of the North Sewickley Presbyterian Church from 1856 to 1871; he died February 24, 1871.
- ⁸ McBeth, *Journal I*, November 30, 1882.
- ⁹ Wellsville, Ohio, McBeth family tradition and personal communication.
- ¹⁰ Mrs. J. Vale Downie, Beaver Falls, Pennsylvania, personal communication.
- ¹¹ Sue McBeth to J.C. Lowrie, July 21, 1884.
- ¹² Sue McBeth to Wellsville [Ohio] family, August 4, 1873.
- ¹³ Sue McBeth to J.C. Lowrie, February 27, 1879.
- ¹⁴ *Presbyterian Church, Wellsville, Ohio, "Missionary Society Minutes"* [Presbyterian Church, Wellsville, Ohio]
- ¹⁵ McBeth, *Journal I*, September 15, 1879.
- ¹⁶ *Ibid.*, September 22, 1879.
- ¹⁷ Samuel Bowles, *Our New West*, (Hartford Ct.: Hartford Publishing Co., 1870), p. 208.
- ¹⁸ McBeth, *Journal I*, September 29, 1879. Samuel Bowles, *Our New West*, p. 342.
- ¹⁹ McBeth, *Journal I*, (n.d.).
- ²⁰ The Reverend Aaron L. Lindsley was pastor of the First Presbyterian Church, Portland, Oregon, until his death in 1891. O.O. Howard, *Nez Perce Joseph*, pp. 74-75: "Portland . . . this cosmopolitan city of twenty thousand . . . lively with . . . trade."
- ²¹ Samuel Bowles, *Our New West*, p. 480.
- ²² O.O. Howard, *Nez Perce Joseph*, p. 37. Samuel Bowles, *Our New West*, pp. 477-478: "these five miles of the Cascades, the river makes a descent of forty feet, half of it in one mile, but it takes the form of rough and rocky rapids, and not of one distinct, measurable fall."
"high walls of basaltic rock rose slowly on either side; huge boulders, thrown off in the convulsion of water with mountain, lay lower down the valley, or stood out in the stream — one so large, rising in a rough egg-shape some thousand feet up into the air, as to become a conspicuous and memorable element in the landscape."
"The entire water of the Columbia is compressed for a short distance into a space only one hundred and sixty feet wide, lined, bottom and sides, with stone . . ."
- ²³ Russell Blankenship, *And There Were Men*, (New York: Alfred A. Knopf,

1942). pp. 222-223: Only twenty years before Kate's arrival, "The Dalles was an excellent training school of outlaws and hoodlums, for that town was a port of call for the motley procession of thieves, gamblers, and ruffians voyaging to the Oro Fino and Salmon River mines of Idaho."

Samuel Bowles, *Our New West*, p. 470: "Two millions of dollars in gold dust were brought in from Eastern Oregon and Idaho [to The Dalles] during the single month of June, 1865."

²⁴ O.O. Howard, *Chief Joseph, His Pursuit and Capture*, p. 37.

²⁵ *Ibid.*, p. 39.

²⁶ *Ibid.*, p. 40.

²⁷ *Ibid.*, p. 45.

²⁸ Sue McBeth to Rev. J.C. Lowrie, December 11, 1879. *Gospel Hymns in the Nez Perce Language* (Lake Forest, Illinois, 1897)

The Truth, vol. VI (1881), pp. 505-508: "After Presbytery . . . Robert Williams [with Mr. Deffenbaugh] had attended . . . Synod in western Oregon," not far from Walla Walla, where he met Kate.

²⁹ Kate McBeth wrote a summary of her trip West to Mr. McCord, October 23, 1879, from Lapwai, Idaho.

Chapter 9

¹ McBeth, *Journal I*, 3rd Sab. Oct. 1880.

² *Ibid.*, Christmas, 1879.

³ *Ibid.*, Last Sab. of Jan. 1880.

⁴ *Ibid.*, Jan. 24, 1880: "The new house is the trouble."

Ibid., April 1, 1880: ". . . am afraid to say I want a new house."

⁵ *Ibid.*, January 1, 1881: "Whatever is to be done with all these Ministers. Mr. D. [Deffenbaugh] does not know. Will not go to Joseph's people and are not prepared to go anywhere else. We need the Spirit of the Lord to take the selfishness away."

⁶ *Ibid.*, April 1, 1880.

⁷ McBeth, *The Nez Perces Since Lewis and Clark*, pp. 134-135: ". . . in my schoolroom hang two wall pockets full of patterns. Every woman who has ever been in school has had one or two dresses cut, basted, fitted, and a pattern . . . to take home for future use. Not only the women of the school, but every woman who wished to dress like a white woman . . . Oh! how often, when I have been tired from the school room work, have I seen a woman slipping around to the back door, and knew she had under her shawl material for a dress — but no linings . . . The basting for them had to be done at first. If not, just as likely as not, and a great deal likelier, I would see that woman or that woman's child at church the next Sabbath, with the back gores to the front."

⁸ *Ibid.*, p. 135: "All who have ever been in school have knit at least one pair of stockings; the yarn . . . the needles, presented to them. They enjoy knitting. Some of them are speedy."

⁹ *Ibid.*, pp. 102-103: "Although the old long tent, or long house, had been discarded, they were not yet set in separate families, too many still huddling

together into a one-room house or tent. Tripping and stumbling into sin was a common occurrence, even with a professing Christian . . . Miss S.L. McBeth thoroughly understood conditions. She 'finished her mind' and decided that the breaking of the seventh commandment would expel or keep out any offender, and like her countryman, John Knox, she knew no compromise. She often said to me, 'We will not remember or consider the heathen past — only their walk since they professed Christianity . . .' Miss S.L. McBeth often said, 'Help any one in domestic and in spiritual matters, but a book must not be put into the hands of a dishonourable woman, thereby giving her influence, or power, among her people for harm.' The desire of the people to know and to read were so great, she knew she could draw the lines tight, and still have good schools. All this, at the time, looked very narrow to me. I was in such a hurry to lift all the women up."

¹⁰ Francis Haines, *The Nez Perces*, p. 89.

¹¹ Kate McBeth to John C. Lowrie, June 2, 1880. Kate McBeth, "The Nez Perces and the Perplexities of Civilization," *Home Mission Monthly*, 28:81-82 (February, 1914).

¹² McBeth, *Journal 1*, 2nd Sab. 1881: "Been at home all day. Sore throat from sitting this week of prayer in church without fire."

¹³ McBeth, *The Nez Perces Since Lewis and Clark*, p. 83: Solomon Whitman was one of the three deacons ordained by Spalding in Kamiah before his death in 1874.

¹⁴ *Ibid.*, p. 78: Felix and Sarah Corbett had been married at the 1870 Revival Meeting held by George Waters, but "Felix, years afterwards, took his matronly wife up to Robert . . . and was married 'for sure.'"

¹⁵ McBeth, *Journal 1*, 2nd Sab. Feb. 1880.

¹⁶ Kate McBeth to John C. Lowrie, April 5, 1881.

¹⁷ *History of North Idaho*, p. 85. McBeth, *The Nez Perces Since Lewis and Clark*, p. 106. McBeth, *Journal 1*, August 25, 1880.

¹⁸ McBeth, *Journal 1*, 3rd Sab. Sept. 1880.

¹⁹ McBeth, *Journal 1*, 3rd Sab. Oct. 1880.

²⁰ McBeth, *Journal 11*, pp. 44-45: "I have great pity for the old people of any tribe who have none of the inspiring old songs of the past ages in their own tongue."

²¹ McBeth, *Journal 1*, April 1, 1880.

²² *Ibid.*, 1st Sab. of Nov. 1880: "Next Sab. likely Sue will be in her new house. I do not know who with me."

²³ *Ibid.*, Dec. 12th, 1880.

²⁴ *Ibid.*, Dec. 5, 1880.

²⁵ *Ibid.*, 4th Sab. March 1880: "I am longing at times to say what, Sue, have I done to be punished so — have I done enough for me to run away so fast to the Lord?" *Ibid.*, April 1, 1880: "the plotting & planning to remove me from this work, would be pushed in between [us] & how easy it is to dwell upon my grievances."

²⁶ G.L. Deffenbaugh, S.L. McBeth, Kate C. McBeth to John C. Lowrie, June 14, 1880.

²⁷ James Reuben had contributed invaluable services in the 1877 War; John Monteith to Sue McBeth, July 22, 1877: "The Lapwai Indians have done bravely

acting as scouts. James Reuben in particular having swam the Salmon river twice to carry dispatches to General Howard where no white man would risk the trip." Nevertheless, Sue McBeth to Dr. A.L. & Mrs. Lindsley, January 26, 1885, considered James Reuben "a moral delinquent."

²⁸ McBeth, *Journal I*, February 22, 1880; 1st Sab. of Nov. 1880.

²⁹ *Ibid.*, January 24, 1880: "I wonder if it is this way on every Reservation . . . Oh watch me & keep me from narrowness of soul & every other evil thing that seems to belong to missionary ground." *Ibid.*, March 4, 1880: "filled up with envy, hatred, intriguing & every unchrist like feeling. Lord have Mercy & do not cast me off forever." *Ibid.*, 3rd Sab. Oct. 1880: "give me the wisdom & consecration needed for my work, put self far away . . . let there be no room for one unkind bitter feeling."

³⁰ McBeth, *The Nez Perces Since Lewis and Clark*, p. 110. McBeth, *Journal I*, Christmas, 1880.

³¹ McBeth, *Journal I*, Christmas, 1880.

³² *Ibid.*, 1st Sab. Jan. 1881.

³³ *Ibid.*, New Years 1881; Feb. 20, 1881.

³⁴ *Ibid.*, April 17, 1881.

³⁵ McBeth, *The Nez Perces Since Lewis and Clark*, p. 135.

³⁶ McBeth, *Journal I*, April 10, 1881.

³⁷ *Ibid.*, May 1, 1881.

³⁸ *Ibid.*, 2nd Sab. May 1881.

³⁹ *Ibid.*, 5th Sab. July 1881.

⁴⁰ *Ibid.*, last Sab. June 1881: "soon the loved face of Mrs. Campbell will be gone from Kamiah. In my depression about her going I almost fail to thank God for giving her to me these two years and making her to take a sister's place."

⁴¹ *Ibid.*, 5th Sab. July 1881.

⁴² Myron Eels, *History of Indian Missions on the Pacific Coast*, (Philadelphia: Union Press, 1882). p. 72: According to General Howard it had been Jonah, who defended Christianity four years earlier by saying: "It makes Indians stop buying and selling wives; stop gambling and horse racing for money; stop getting drunk and running about; stop all time lazy and make them all time work."

⁴³ McBeth, *The Nez Perces Since Lewis and Clark*, p. 79.

McBeth, *Journal I*, last Sab. June 1881.

⁴⁴ McBeth, *Journal I*, July 6, 1881. Kate McBeth to William Rankin, July 11, 1881.

⁴⁵ McBeth, *Journal I*, Sep. 2 (Sab) 1881.

⁴⁶ *Ibid.*, Feb. 20, 1881.

⁴⁷ *Ibid.*, July 2 & 5, 1881.

⁴⁸ *Ibid.*, Dec. 12, 1880.

⁴⁹ *Ibid.*, 1st Sab. Nov., Thanksgiving, November 30, 1881.

⁵⁰ *Ibid.*, Dec. 20, 1881. "old Eagle" as Kate called him was Eagle From the Light, who since his disillusionment with Spalding had consistently remained antitreaty, anti-white, and anti-Christian.

⁵¹ *Tscemicum*, pp. 29-30.

⁵² *McBeth, Journal II*, p. 85.

Tscemicum, pp. 14-17; 18-19: Born in Alpowa, that "fertile little valley on the Snake," so named because Alpowa means Day of Rest, Timothy was a true link to the past. Like Uncle Billy Williams he too as a little boy had witnessed the arrival of Lewis and Clark. Timothy's mother was the sister of Chief Twisted Hair, "a distinguished Nez Perce chief," which relationship made Chief Red Bear his cousin. Tima, Timothy's wife, was a sister of Old Chief Joseph. As a mature man Timothy with Red Wolf had been a sub-chief of the Alpowa band. One of Spalding's early converts and friends, he had been given apple seeds with which he helped establish the earliest orchard on the Snake. He was one of the signers of Governor Stevens' treaty and later helped rescue Colonel Steptoe's forces. "Timothy and Chief Red Bear were credited with calling the Council which selected the four delegates to go to St. Louis."

⁵³ *McBeth, Journal I*, Dec. 20, 1881.

Chapter 10

¹ *McBeth, Journal I*, February 3, 1882: "Rachel has become so much like a white woman in her house & ways & not at all moody. Oh that I was more of a missionary and less of the teacher." *McBeth, The Nez Perces Since Lewis and Clark*, p. 127: "She [Rachel] is a bright Christian woman, and has her brother's [Robert Williams] ability as a leader. Her wifely and womanly qualities . . . fit her to be a teacher in the school room and in the homes also. Her own home . . . was clean, bright and cheery."

² *McBeth, Journal I*, March 19, 1882.

³ *Ibid.*, May 21, 1882.

⁴ *Ibid.*, March 5, 3rd Sab. April, 1882.

⁵ *Ibid.*, March 5, May 21, June 11, 1882.

⁶ *Ibid.*, June 11, 1882; July 9, 1883; Christmas Evening 1883; August 12, 1885: Kate *McBeth* to Portland Firm, June 12, 1881, Kamiah, ordered an organ to be sent to her from "the East."

⁷ *McBeth, Journal I*, July 17, 1882. *McBeth, The Nez Perces Since Lewis and Clark*, pp. 125-133: This account gives much the same facts but incorporates several Lapwai trips and is inaccurate about dates.

⁸ *McBeth, The Nez Perces Since Lewis and Clark*, pp. 132-133; *Ibid.* p. 115: "Felix Corbett was the last one to hold the office [of] chief."

⁹ *McBeth, Journal I*, August 10, 1882.

¹⁰ *Ibid.*, Oct. 1881.

¹¹ John Monteith to Edward P. Smith, January 1, 1874.

¹² *McBeth, Journal I*, last Sab. June 1881; Aug. 10, 1882; Nov. 24, 1882.

¹³ *Ibid.*, last Sab. Sep., Oct. 15, 1882.

¹⁴ *McBeth, The Nez Perces Since Lewis and Clark*, p. 13 [introduction by Alice C. Fletcher]: "Colonel McConville, the vigilant, untiring friend and faithful officer, with his gentle, resourceful wife."

Gay, *Choup-Nit-Ki*, I, pp. 27-28: Mr. McConville was "a little wiry Scotsman of meek demeanor and strong sense, who served in the Joseph War [1877], fought the Indians with all his might, became interested in them, and ended by becoming their fast friend." *History of North Idaho*, p. 94: Colonel McConville was killed leading a charge at the battle of Santa Ana in the Spanish-American War and was buried with full military honors in Lewiston, Idaho, April 12, 1898.

¹⁵ McBeth, *Journal I*, last Sab. Sep., Oct. 15, 16, 1882.

¹⁶ *Ibid.*, Oct. 16, Nov. 24, 1882.

¹⁷ *Ibid.*, last Sab. Sept., Nov. 24, 30, 1882.

¹⁸ *Ibid.*, August 10, Dec. 1, 1882; Jan. 26, Feb. 25, 1883; Feb. 10, 1884.

¹⁹ *Ibid.*, May 21, Oct. 16, 1882.

²⁰ *Ibid.*, Christmas, 1882.

²¹ *Ibid.*, Jan. 3, Jan. 26, 1883.

²² Crawford, *The Nez Perces Since Spalding*, p. 9.

²³ McBeth, *Journal I*, April 28, 1883. Susan McBeth to Dr. J.C. Lowrie, April, 1883.

²⁴ Crawford, *The Nez Perces Since Spalding*, p. 25.

²⁵ McBeth, *Journal I*, Jan. 3, May 14, 20, 27, 1883.

²⁶ *Ibid.*, 1st Sab. April, July 9, 12, 1883; February 11, March 23, 1884.

²⁷ *Ibid.*, May 14, 27, 1883.

²⁸ *History of North Idaho*, p. 111.

²⁹ McBeth, *The Nez Perces Since Lewis and Clark*, p. 131.

³⁰ Laufe, *An Army Doctor's Wife on the Frontier*, p. 223.

³¹ McBeth, *Journal I*, Sept. 7, 1883.

³² *Ibid.*, October 28, 1883.

³³ *Ibid.*, Nov. 17, last Sab. Nov., Christmas Eve, 1883.

³⁴ *Ibid.*, Oct. 1881.

³⁵ *Ibid.*, Dec. 28, 1883; New Year's Evening, 1884.

³⁶ *Ibid.*, New Years Evening, 2nd Sab. of January, 1884; May 5, 1885

³⁷ *Ibid.*, Christmas Evening, Dec. 28, 1883; 2nd Sab. of January, January 31, Feb. 11, 1884.

³⁸ *Ibid.*, Feb. 10, 18, 1884.

³⁹ *Ibid.*, March 31, 1884; March 23, 1884: "Sue of course in trouble. Says it all comes out of my school because the Lawyers are in it. traces the trouble about plowing Sarah's land [Mrs. Mark Williams] between her & Luke [Williams] Mary [Brooks?] as well as the Lawyers must go. Lord show me if I am wrong in this, if right, give me grace to bear it. how wide apart in heart we sisters are. bring us nearer to The."

⁴⁰ Kate McBeth to Dr. J.C. Lowrie, March 31, 1884: "Every woman who has ever been in my S. [school] & some outside have been taught how to make yeast & bread, but am certain of only a few . . . no trouble with any of them if I would

provide the yeast. Oh, they have not the things to make it or nothing to keep it in — or forget to make it fresh. They do not like care, want to work hard and then rest."

McBeth, *Journal I*, Feb. 8, 1882.

⁴¹ McBeth, *The Nez Perces Since Lewis and Clark*, pp. 105-106.

⁴² McBeth, *Journal I*, Feb. 10, July 4, 1884: "What an abundance of food at R's [Robert Williams] & oh how some of them do eat. helped to cook & wash up the dishes. got some of the bags & pots off the floor where things are generally kept. Fannie [Mrs. James Hayes] helped me while Tuke [illegible?] & other wife sat & looked on."

⁴³ *Ibid.*, Jan. 13, March 6, April 20, 28, 1884. McBeth, *The Nez Perces Since Lewis and Clark*, pp. 113-114.

⁴⁴ McBeth, *Journal I*, April 28, June 29, 1884.

⁴⁵ *Ibid.*, July 4, 1884.

⁴⁶ *Ibid.*, July 9, 1884.

⁴⁷ Sue McBeth to J.C. Lowrie, July 21, 1884.

⁴⁸ McBeth, *Journal I*, July 28, 1884.

⁴⁹ Sue McBeth to J.C. Lowrie, March 31, 1884.

⁵⁰ McBeth, *The Nez Perces Since Lewis and Clark*, p. 123.

⁵¹ McBeth, *Journal I*, August 15, 1884.

⁵² *Ibid.*, November 2, Thanksgiving, 1884.

⁵³ *Ibid.*, last Sab. of 1884; February 28, 1885.

⁵⁴ *Ibid.*, Christmas, 1884.

⁵⁵ *Ibid.*, New Years Evening, 1885.

Chapter 11

¹ McBeth, *Journal I*, March 16, 1885.

² *Ibid.*, February 28, 1885.

³ *Ibid.*, April 2, 1885.

⁴ *Ibid.*, May 5, 1885.

⁵ *Ibid.*, February 28, 1885.

⁶ *Ibid.*, June 5, 1885.

McBeth, *The Nez Perces Since Lewis and Clark*, p. 128: "At Lapwai I saw Mrs. Defenbaugh in her cozy little home [during the 1884 vacation]. That is always a very difficult part of the field, the contrast between the community there and at Kamiah being very great."

⁷ McBeth, *Journal I*, June 9, 1885. Charles E. Monteith to John S.C. Atkins, July 21, 1885.

⁸ McBeth, *Journal I*, June 11, 1882; May 24, June 9, 1885.

⁹ *Ibid.*, June 9, 10, 1885.

¹⁰ *Ibid.*, July 12, 1885.

¹¹ *Ibid.*, July 3, 1885.

¹² *Foreign Missionary*, July, 1885.

¹³ *McBeth, Journal I*, May 5, 23, June 9, 1885; July 4, 1887. *History of North Idaho*, p. 459.

¹⁴ *McBeth, Journal I*, July 12, 1885.

¹⁵ *Ibid.*, July 19, 1885.

¹⁶ *McBeth, The Nez Perces Since Lewis and Clark*, p. 115: "Robert Williams . . . had not a drop of royal blood in his veins."

¹⁷ Sue *McBeth* to Dr. and Mrs. A.L. Lindsley, Jan. 10, 1885.

¹⁸ *McBeth, The Nez Perces Since Lewis and Clark*, pp. 111-112.

¹⁹ *McBeth, Journal I*, July 29, 1885.

²⁰ *Ibid.*

²¹ *Ibid.*

²² *Ibid.*

²³ Apparently there were two Tom Hills associated during the 19th century with the Nez Perces:

(1) Clifford M. Drury, *First White Women over the Rockies*, vol. I, p. 226, quotes Spalding writing to Green, January 24, 1846: Tom Hill, "a most blasphemuous debased infidel," had been a companion to Kit Carson and Joe Meek, married to a Nez Perce woman.

Tscemicum, p. 53: At one time he reportedly had gathered together some hundred lodges of Nez Perces over which he acted as chief, leading his followers in polygamy. It was believed that "he had joined Craig in inciting the Indians against Spalding."

Josephy, *The Nez Perce Indians and the Opening of the Northwest*, (New Haven, Ct. Yale University Press, 1965). pp. 239-240: After serving in California with Fremont, Tom Hill settled on a Delaware Indian Reservation in Kansas, where he died about 1860.

(2) Tom Hill of the Nine Pipes' Murder, was the son of another Delaware, Jim Simonds, who had probably also been associated with Fremont in coming West, later serving as a guide for Governor I.I. Stevens.

²⁴ *Foreign Missionary*, July, 1885.

²⁵ *McBeth, Journal I*, June 9, 1885.

²⁶ *Lewiston Teller*, August 18, 1885: "Both on the prairie and Salmon river, there is an intense feeling that agent Monteith made a grave mistake in appointing any one of these murderous scoundrels on the Indian police force, a position which practically gives them authority to shoot or cut, with or without justification or provocation. "Mr. Monteith is not justified . . . in appointing these renegades as conservators of the peace, when there are any number of intelligent, honest and loyal Indians far more capable of maintaining order on the reservation and far less likely to abuse their power than these blood-thirsty butchers from the Indian territory."

The Nez Perce News, August 7, 1885 (AFP) [Aaron P. Parker]: "All the treaty Indians at Kamiah are fighting mad at the agents decision and threaten to wipe out the hostiles."

- ²⁷ McBeth, *Journal I*, August 2, 1885.
- ²⁸ Sue McBeth to W.T. Coffin, August 5, 1885.

Chapter 12

- ¹ McBeth, *Journal I*, August 10, 12, 1885.
- ² *Ibid.*
- ³ Sue McBeth to W.T. Coffin, August 5, 1885.
- ⁴ R.W. Hill to the Honorable A.B. Upshaw, Acting Commissioner of Indian Affairs, August 24, 1885.
- ⁵ Sue McBeth to Rev. Dr. A.L. Lindsley, October 2, 1885.
- ⁶ McBeth, *Journal I*, October 4; October 20, 1885: "Oh, Oh, the disappointment! Dr. E. [Ellinwood] came 4 days to Lapwai, the miller [Crae] sent for and he and Dr. Substantiated charges. Truly the Lord shows me that deliverance is not to come my way . . . At first my heart nearly broke but is now mended and wait a letter from Mr. D. [Deffenbaugh] to know if I will be allowed to go."
- ⁷ *Ibid.*, September 26, 1885: "the people all who would be likely to befriend us are away on the mountains . . . Silas [Whitman], Robert [Williams], & James [Hayes]."
Ibid., August 2, 12, 1885: "I try to think Jesus is coming to us walking on these fierce billows. Oh for faith to wait . . . What fearful times these are . . . Lord Jesus thou alone can bring peace and quiet. do all missionaries have such seasons of anxiety and peril?"
Ibid., October 4, 1885.
- ⁸ *Ibid.*, September 26, 1885.
- ⁹ Charles Monteith to Rev. F.F. Ellinwood, August 24, 1886: "Referring to Miss Kate C. McBeth I will say, had I been reappointed, I would have given her twenty four hours to leave the reserve and upon refusal, would have instructed the police to remove her. It is impossible for her to attend to her own business."
- ¹⁰ Sue McBeth to Mr. William Rankin, 1887 (no month, no day) McBeth, *Journal I*, September 26, 1885.
- ¹¹ Sue McBeth to Mr. William Rankin, 1887 [no month, no day]: "If she could help it, she would never speak the word [money] to the Board for self or pupils, but she cannot."
- ¹² Sue McBeth to Rev. A.L. Lindsley, May 27, 1886: It cost Sue \$15 a month to hold 2 double houses for her pupils' occupancy.
- ¹³ Sue McBeth to William Rankin, August 3, 1886: "I have long wanted Schaff's Encyclopedia . . . my old, well worn Encyclopedia only reaching down to 1835."
- ¹⁴ *Ibid.*
- ¹⁵ *St. Louis Post Dispatch*, September 21, 1882: "The Committee on Foreign Missions of the St. Louis Presbytery Proceedings at the Semi-Annual Session."
- ¹⁶ Sue McBeth to Philadelphia Home Office, April 10, 1886: "Miss McB. has reached the limit of her own resources even though reducing personal expenses to the very lowest, too far for health perhaps."

¹⁷ *History of North Idaho*, pp. 593-594: Aaron Foster Parker, born in England in 1856, left home at sixteen to spend the next six years at sea. Because of his increasing deafness, a career at sea became impossible, and he arrived in Idaho via San Francisco in 1876, just in time to be involved in the Joseph War. From 1880 to 1883 he was in charge of the *Nez Perce News* at Lewiston, Idaho. In 1883 he followed the gold rush to Coeur d'Alene, but the next year wrote for the *Coeur d'Alene Eagle*. After returning to Lewiston and the *Nez Perce News*, he founded in 1886 the *Idaho County Free Press*.

¹⁸ *McBeth, Journal I*, September 23, November 1, 9, 1885.

¹⁹ *Ibid.*, October 20, 25, November 1, 1885.

²⁰ *Ibid.*, October 20, November 9, 1885.

²¹ *Ibid.*, November 19, 1885.

²² *Ibid.*, October 20, November 9, 19, 1885.

²³ Kate *McBeth* to Dr. John C. Lowrie, March 31, 1884.

²⁴ Kate *McBeth* to Rev. F.F. Ellinwood, November [no day], 1885.

²⁵ *McBeth, Journal I*, Thanksgiving, 1885.

²⁶ *Ibid.*, Christmas, 1885.

²⁷ Sue *McBeth* to Kate *McBeth*, December 30, 1885. Sue *McBeth* to Rev. F.F. Ellinwood, Christmas Morning, 1885.

²⁸ Charles Lemuel Thompson, *The Soul of America*, (Chicago, Ill.: Revell Co., 1910) p. 79.

²⁹ Sue *McBeth* to Rev. F.F. Ellinwood, February 10, 1886: "By using the strictest economy and going without much, none has had to go hungry yet this winter."

³⁰ *Ibid.*

³¹ *McBeth, Journal I*, November 9, 1885.

³² *Nez Perce News*, June, 1886. Sue *McBeth* to Rev. F.F. Ellinwood, Christmas Morning, 1885.

³³ *Nez Perce News*, August 13, 1885: (AFP—[Aaron Foster Parker]) "the Slate Creek fire eaters would have organized a war party."

³⁴ *McBeth, Journal I*, February 13, 1886.

³⁵ *Ibid.*, 1st Sab. 1886.

³⁶ *Ibid.*, March 3, 1886.

³⁷ Sue *McBeth* to Dr. John C. Lowrie, undated scrap, 1886. *McBeth, Journal I*, April 11, 1886.

³⁸ Sue *McBeth* to Rev. A.L. Lindsley, May 27, June 26, 1886.

³⁹ *Nez Perce News*, June 1886.

⁴⁰ *McBeth, Journal I*, November 1, 1st Sab. 1886, January 31, February 6, 1886.

⁴¹ *Ibid.*, November 8, 1885; January 24, 1886.

⁴² *Ibid.*, December 1, 1885; February 6, April 1, 1886.

⁴³ *Ibid.*, May 7, 1886.

Tscemicum, pp. 114-115: "Mrs. Judge Buck" was the wife of Norman Buck, who

was confirmed as Justice of the Supreme Court of Idaho Territory in 1880, holding court in each county once a year. "Historians noted that 'justice went on tiptoe here until Judge Buck came to the territory.'"

⁴⁴ James Hayes, Archie Lawyer, Enoch Pond, Silas Witman, James Hines, Peter Lindsley, William Wheeler, Robert Williams.

⁴⁵ Sue McBeth to Dr. & Mrs. A.L. Lindsley, Jan. 10, 1885.

⁴⁶ McBeth, *Journal I*, May 23, 1886.

⁴⁷ Sue McBeth to Rev. F.F. Ellinwood, March 2, 1886.

⁴⁸ *Choup-Nit-Ki*, vol. I, p. 62.

⁴⁹ McBeth, *Journal II*, pp. 76-79. Mary M. Crawford, "Native Missionary Leadership," *Women and Missions*, 8:181 (August, 1931) has a similar account.

⁵⁰ McBeth, *Journal I*, July 6, 1886.

⁵¹ *Ibid.*, August 21, 30, 1886.

⁵² Robert G. Bailey, *River of No Return*, (Lewiston, Idaho, 1947), pp. 296-297: "After the war was over [1877] he [Captain Kane] turned in a bill of \$3 per day for his services. This was a lot of money in those days, and so there was a special investigation by Government officials to find out just what services had been rendered. A part of the official record of this investigation reads:

Agent: 'Cap, just what did you do to earn this \$3 a day?'

Cap: 'From daylight until dark I sat up on a high hill near Lapwai, on the lookout to warn of the approach of hostile Indians.'

Agent: 'But Cap, surely you do not consider this worth \$3 a day.'

Cap: 'Well, it was not so much the matter of the job of lookout, but I had just been married a few days before I was ordered to take up this lookout position, and I considered having to spend that much time away from my happy home worth the money asked'

C.T. Stranahan, who was Indian agent at Lapwai a number of years, vouches for the accuracy of this story, and avers that "Cap" received the compensation asked for."

⁵³ McBeth, *Journal I*, October 4, 13, 15, 1886.

⁵⁴ *Annual Report, Secretary of the Interior*, from Warren D. Robbins of the Nez Perce Indian Agency, Idaho, September 15, 1890: "In the twelve months before taking charge five different persons had been in charge."

⁵⁵ McBeth, *Journal I*, November 2, 3, 4, 18, 30, 1886.

⁵⁶ *Ibid.*, December 4, 5, 1886.

McBeth, *The Nez Perces Since Lewis and Clark*, pp. 158-159: A similar version of the same event is given.

⁵⁷ McBeth, *Journal I*, Christmas, 1886.

⁵⁸ McBeth, *The Nez Perces Since Lewis and Clark*, pp. 118-120, 159.

Chapter 13

¹ M. Alfreda Elsensohn, *Pioneer Days in Idaho County*, vol. II, p. 225.

² McBeth, *Journal I*, February 18, 1887.

- ³ Sue McBeth to Mr. Wm. Rankin [no month, no day] 1887.
- ⁴ Charles Monteith to John D. Atkins, July 21, 1885.
- ⁵ Kate McBeth, *Journal I*, New Years Day, January 3, 5, 1887.
- ⁶ *Ibid.*, March 8, 1887.
- ⁷ *Ibid.*, February 18, 29, 1887.
- ⁸ *Ibid.* March 8, 19, 24, 1887.
- ⁹ *Ibid.*, January 5, March 1, 18, 24, 29, 1887.
- ¹⁰ *Ibid.*, January 5, 1887; May 1, 1887: "friend [Cap Kane?] will have a prominent place in church & will try to break up my S. [school] as he came near doing last winter . . . Oh I feel like saying today I cannot stay."
- ¹¹ *Ibid.*, April 10, 1887.
- ¹² *Ibid.*, May 8, 1887.
- ¹³ *Ibid.*, May 22, 1887: "A [Archie's] dishonesty given as objection."
- ¹⁴ *Ibid.*, May 27, 1887: "Calls were read & handed to James Hayes from Umatilla — Wm. Wheeler from North F [Fork] Kamiah for Robert, Enoch [Pond] & James Hines to be sent to Spokans."
- ¹⁵ *Ibid.*
- ¹⁶ Sue McBeth to Rev. F.F. Ellinwood, July 12, 1887.
- ¹⁷ McBeth, *Journal I*, June 12, 20, 1887.
- ¹⁸ *Ibid.*, June 20, 1887.
- ¹⁹ McBeth, *The Nez Perces Since Lewis and Clark*, p. 164: "We then had a Boston lawyer as agent. He was in favour with the class of Indians who loved the races — and I presume he did also." [George W. Norris was agent 1887-1889].
- ²⁰ McBeth, *Journal I*, June 12, July 3, 4, 1887.
- McBeth, *The Nez Perces Since Lewis and Clark*, p. 165.
- ²¹ Lewiston Teller, July 9, 1887.
- ²² *Annual Report, Secretary of the Interior*, vol. II, pp. 85-89, George W. Norris, August 20, 1888.
- ²³ Sue McBeth to Rev. F.F. Ellinwood, July 12, 1887.
- ²⁴ Sue McBeth to Mr. Wm. Rankin, May 23, 1887.
- ²⁵ Sue McBeth to Rev. F.F. Ellinwood, July 12, December 12, 1887.
- ²⁶ *Choup-Nit-Ki*, vol. II, p. 220.
- ²⁷ Sue McBeth to Mr. F.F. Ellinwood, December 12, 1887. Sue McBeth to Mr. Wm. Rankin [no month, no day] 1887.
- ²⁸ Sue McBeth to Mr. Wm. Rankin [no month, no day] 1887: Harry Hayes was "one of the most promising of her pupils."
- ²⁹ McBeth, *Journal I*, November 19, Thanksgiving, 1887.
- ³⁰ *Ibid.*, January 5, August 7, 1887.
- ³¹ *Ibid.*, November 12, 1887. Sue McBeth to Mr. Wm. Rankin, October 4, 1887.

- 32 Sue McBeth to Rev. F.F. Ellinwood, February 27, 1886.
- 33 McBeth, *Journal I*, November 12, 19, 1887.
- 34 Sue McBeth to Rev. F.F. Ellinwood, December 12, 1887.
- 35 *Lewiston Teller*, September 15, 1957.
- 36 McBeth, *Journal I*, Christmas 1887; January 20, 1888.
- 37 *Ibid.*, July 31, 1881; New Years, 1888.
- 38 Kate McBeth to Editor of the *Saturday Review*, May 26, 1888.
- 39 McBeth, *Journal II*, pp. 99-100, "Martha."
- 40 Sue McBeth to Editor of the *Saturday Review*, May 23, 1880.
- 41 McBeth, *Journal I*, March 4, 27, April 8, 1888.
- 42 *Ibid.*, March 4, 1888: "strange it will seem in the eyes of the world this Grand Minister the left one of all the other seven have places & he the son of a head Chief [Archie Lawyer]."
- 43 *Ibid.*, April 1, 1888: Cornelis J. Brosnan, *History of the State of Idaho*, (New York: C. Scribners, 1948). p. 327f.
- 44 M. Alfreda Elsensohn, *Pioneer Days in Idaho County*, vol. I, p. 121.
- 45 Mrs. Wm. S. Ladd to Sue McBeth [no month, no day] 1888.
- 46 McBeth, *Journal I*, July 4, 1888.
- 47 McBeth, *The Nez Perces Since Lewis and Clark*, p. 208: "The Nez Perces went on their own ponies over the mountains . . . one man needed as many as three ponies, for they must change off and so rest them. The shoeing of so many horses . . . was quite an expense. It was not two or three who formed the missionary party, but a dozen or more. They must have their singers along and cooks, also."
- 48 Clifford M. Drury, *Presbyterian Panorama*, p. 114. McBeth, *Journal I*, August 22, 1888.
- 49 *Ibid.*, New Years, 1889: "Ten Christmasses Ten New Years & is not this the best of all . . . ten penitents weeping to the front most of them young men & women. . . . such singing & going up to shake hands as there was . . . the Miller [Crae?] I know thought of Virginia Methodists . . . a whole household rec'd . . . Red Cloud they were married baptised & received Lords Supper & children baptized same day . . . what a nice Christmas tree & evening we had. Miss Walker at organ and Jamie Maxwell cornet."
- 50 *Choup-Nit-Ki*, vol. II, pp. 260-265.
- 51 McBeth, *Journal I*, May 6, 1889.
- 52 *Annual Report*, Secretary of the Interior, vol. II, p. 843, 1889.
- 53 H. Heth to Robert Williams, April 30, 1889.
- 54 *Annual Report*, Secretary of the Interior, vol. I, p. 330, from Charles E. Monteith, August 24, 1886.
- 55 McBeth, *Journal I*, 1889 [undated, probably June].
- 56 Gay, *Choup-Nit-Ki*, vol. I. p. 201.
- 57 *Idaho County Free Press*, June 22, 1889: "During Monteith's former term he

had forfeited the respect and good will of the tribe by repeated acts of cruelty . . . he had no interest whatever in the welfare of the Indians . . . a man totally unfitted."

Chapter 14

¹ Gay, *Choup-Nit-Ki*, vol. I, p. 8.

² *The Lewiston Teller*, May 30, 1889.

³ Gay, *Choup-Nit-Ki*, vol. I, pp. 14-15, 25.

⁴ *The Lewiston Teller*, May 30, 1889. Gay, *Choup-Nit-Ki*, vol. I, p. 13.

⁵ Gay, *Choup-Nit-Ki*, vol. I, pp. 21f.

⁶ *Ibid.*, pp. 27, 32, 47, 48, 62.

⁷ Alice Fletcher to Kate McBeth, July 15, 1889.

⁸ Gay, *Choup-Nit-Ki*, vol. I, pp. 56, 76.

⁹ McBeth, *Journal I*, New Years, July 4, 1889.

¹⁰ *Presbytery of Idaho*, Minutes, 1879-1890 (Lewiston, Idaho: MS: Congregational-Presbyterian Church), April 18, 1889. McBeth, *Journal I*, March 4, 1888.

¹¹ McBeth, *Journal I*, July 4, 1889.

¹² Gay, *Choup-Nit-Ki*, vol. I, pp. 92, 109-125.

¹³ *Ibid.*, p. 62.

¹⁴ *Idaho County Free Press*, May 3, August 2, 22, 1889. Gay, *Choup-Nit-Ki*, vol. I, pp. 195-196.

¹⁵ McBeth, *The Nez Perces Since Lewis and Clark*, pp. 186-187.

¹⁶ Gay, *Choup-Nit-Ki*, vol. I, pp. 28-29. Jane Gay to Kate McBeth, April 2, 1900.

¹⁷ Gay, *Choup-Nit-Ki*, vol. I, p. 210; vol. II, pp. 252-253.

¹⁸ *Annual Report*, Secretary of the Interior, vol. II, p. 843, 1889.

¹⁹ McBeth, *Journal I*, April 1, 1888; last night 1889. Kate McBeth to Mrs. Maxwell, April 10, 1890.

²⁰ Gay, *Choup-Nit-Ki*, vol. II, pp. 220-222. *Ibid.*, p. 230: "We arrived at Lapwai April 28th."

²¹ Sue McBeth to Rev. F.F. Ellinwood, Dec. 12, 1887. Sue McBeth to Kate McBeth, April 29, 1890.

²² Kate McBeth to Sue McBeth, May 13, 14, 15, 1890. Thomas M. Gunn to Rev. Silas Whitman, July 16, 1890. McBeth, *The Nez Perces Since Lewis and Clark*, p. 117. McBeth, *Journal II*, p. 108.

²³ Gay, *Choup-Nit-Ki*, vol. II, pp. 230-232; 257-258. McBeth, *Journal I*, July 4, 1890.

²⁴ Gay, *Choup-Nit-Ki*, vol. I, pp. 27, 234-235.

²⁵ *Ibid.*, pp. 247-249.

- ²⁶ McBeth, *Journal I*, last Sab. 1889; July 4, 1890. Gay, *Choup-Nit-Ki*, vol. II, pp. 236, 364-366.
- ²⁷ Gay, *Choup-Nit-Ki*, vol. II, pp. 356-358.
- ²⁸ *Ibid.*, vol. I, pp. 254-274.
- ²⁹ Thomas M. Gunn to Rev. Silas Whitman, July 16, 1890.
- ³⁰ Gay, *Choup-Nit-Ki*, vol. II, pp. 247-249; 328.
- ³¹ *Ibid.*, vol. I, pp. 206-208; vol. II, p. 298. McBeth, *The Nez Perces Since Lewis and Clark*, pp. 78, 115.
- ³² Gay, *Choup-Nit-Ki*, vol. II, p. 322. McBeth, *Journal I*, Oct. 5, November 2, 1890. Sue McBeth to Kate McBeth, November 9, December 24, 1890.
- ³³ Alice Fletcher to Kate McBeth, December 6, 1890.
- ³⁴ Sue McBeth to Kate McBeth, Nov. 8, 1890; April 29, June 7, July 3, Nov. 9, December 24, 1891.
- ³⁵ Alexander Adair to Sue McBeth, June 11, 1891. McBeth, *Journal I*, last night of 1889. *Occident*, March 18, 1891: reprint of a letter of Kate McBeth of February 8, 1891.
- ³⁶ McBeth, *The Nez Perces Since Lewis and Clark*, pp. 191-196.
- ³⁷ Gay, *Choup-Nit-Ki*, vol. II, pp. 342-343.
- ³⁸ *Ibid.*, vol. I, p. 147; vol. II, pp. 380-381.
- ³⁹ *Ibid.*, vol. II, pp. 289; 359-361. McBeth, *The Nez Perces Since Lewis and Clark*, p. 166.
- ⁴⁰ Kate McBeth to Mrs. Maxwell, April 20, 1891.
- ⁴¹ *Dictionary of American Biography*, vol. VI, pp. 463-464. Gay, *Choup-Nit-Ki*, vol. II, pp. 376; 381-383.
- ⁴² Gay, *Choup-Nit-Ki*, vol. II, pp. 384; 402-404; 410-411.
- ⁴³ *Ibid.*, vol. II, p. 414. McBeth, *Journal I*, Thanksgiving, 1891. Alice Fletcher to Kate McBeth, December 17, 1891.
- ⁴⁴ Sue McBeth to Kate McBeth, January 26, July 16, 1892.
- ⁴⁵ Sue McBeth to Kate McBeth, February 9, 1892. *The Lewiston Teller*, April 21, 1892. Clifford M. Drury, *Presbyterian Panorama*, pp. 174; 367-368; 389-390:
Presbyterian Organization: Northern Idaho
Synod of the Pacific — 1852
Presbytery of Oregon 1851 (including "whole Pacific Northwest.")
Synod of the Columbia — 1876 (Washington, Idaho, Oregon)
Presbytery of Idaho 1879 (Idaho and "parts of eastern Washington.")
Synod of Washington — 1890
Presbytery of Walla Walla (Idaho and eastern Washington)
Synod of Idaho — 1909
Presbytery of Northern Idaho — 1931
- ⁴⁶ McBeth, *The Nez Perces Since Lewis and Clark*, pp. 197-198.
- ⁴⁷ Sue McBeth to Kate McBeth, May 2, 1892. Mrs. W.S. Ladd to Sue McBeth, November 21, 1891. Mrs. W.S. Ladd to Kate McBeth, February 10, 1892.
- ⁴⁸ *The Lewiston Teller*, May 12, 19, 1892.

⁴⁹ *The Lewiston Teller*, March 3, May 26, June 30, 1892. Gay, *Choup-Nit-Ki*, vol. II, pp. 420, 426, 441.

⁵⁰ *Idaho County Free Press*, July 15, 1892.

⁵¹ Clifford M. Drury, *First White Women over the Rockies*, vol. I, p. 280: "Utes-sen-ma-le-kin, one of the ringleaders who ordered him and his wife [Mr. and Mrs. Asa B. Smith] to leave Kamiah in the fall of 1840."

⁵² Gay, *Choup-Nit-Ki*, vol. II, pp. 434-438. Remnant of old letter, unsigned, undated, found in the trunk of Maizie Crawford.

⁵³ McBeth, *The Nez Perces Since Lewis and Clark*, pp. 190-191.

Chapter 15

¹ *Interior*, October 2, 1892.

² McBeth, *The Nez Perces Since Lewis and Clark*, pp. 222-223.

³ Mary M. Crawford to Dr. Clifford M. Drury, August 29, 1938.

⁴ McBeth, *Journal I*, April 22, 1893.

⁵ McBeth, *The Nez Perces Since Lewis and Clark*, pp. 229-230.

⁶ *Occident*, June 15, 22, 1893. Alice Fletcher to Kate McBeth, June 15, 1893.

⁷ M. Alfreda Elsensohn, *Pioneer Days in Idaho County*, vol. I, p. 358: relates that the "plain Substantial Monument" was a "great difficulty . . . in getting [it] down to Kamiah. Sent . . . from Lewiston to Cottonwood, it [was] brought down the steep grade by a six-horse team."

⁸ McBeth, *The Nez Perces Since Lewis and Clark*, pp. 231-233.

⁹ Jane Gay to Kate McBeth, July 17, 1893.

¹⁰ *Idaho County Free Press*, November 11, 1893.

¹¹ James H. Hedges, "On Forbidden Ground," *Presbyterian Historical Journal*, vol. 27, no. 3, pp. 142-144, September, 1949.

¹² Alice Fletcher to Kate McBeth, June 15, 1893.

¹³ Mary M. Crawford, *The Nez Perces Since Spalding*, pp. 12; 20-23; 43.

¹⁴ *Tscemicum*, p. 7.

¹⁵ McBeth, *The Nez Perces Since Lewis and Clark*, pp. 187-188. Crawford, *The Nez Perces Since Spalding*, p. 31.

¹⁶ McBeth, *The Nez Perces Since Lewis and Clark*, pp. 188-189.

¹⁷ *The Lewiston Teller*, August 29, 1895.

¹⁸ Haines, *The Nez Perces*, p. 308.

¹⁹ *History of North Idaho*, p. 5. M. Alfreda Elsensohn, *Pioneer Days in Idaho County*, vol. II, pp. 9, 501.

²⁰ McBeth, *The Nez Perces Since Lewis and Clark*, p. 189.

²¹ *Ibid.*, pp. 241-242.

²² "Uncle Billy" Williams [Jonathan] to Miss Fletcher and Miss Gay, 1896.

- ²³ L.W. Jonas to Kate McBeth, March 23, 1896.
- ²⁴ *The East Liverford Crisis*, July 26, 1895.
- ²⁵ McBeth, *The Nez Perces Since Lewis and Clark*, pp. 168-173.
- ²⁶ Crawford, *The Nez Perces Since Spalding*, pp. 24-27.
- ²⁷ Jane Gay to Kate McBeth, January 31, 1896. Note: The Reverend Alexander Adair was minister at Lapwai from fall of 1893 until October, 1896.
- ²⁸ James H. Hedges, "On Forbidden Ground," *Presbyterian Historical Journal*, vol. 27, no. 3, pp. 142-144, September, 1949.
- ²⁹ McBeth, *The Nez Perces Since Lewis and Clark*, p. 174.
- ³⁰ Crawford, *The Nez Perces Since Spalding*, pp. 50-52. Note: *History of North Idaho*, p. 129: By the end of the decade, 1890, the Agency Government buildings at Lapwai had expanded to 14 and the Government School accommodated 85 boys and 65 girls. *Lewiston Tribune*, September 25, 1901: But by 1901 "The Indian school at Lapwai has accommodations for 250 students while only 43 attend."
- ³¹ Jane Gay to Kate McBeth, November 12, 1898.
- ³² James H. Hedges, "On Forbidden Ground," *Presbyterian Historical Journal*, vol. 27, no. 3, pp. 142-144, September, 1949.

Chapter 16

- ¹ Crawford, *The Nez Perces Since Spalding*, p. 40.
- ² Sue McBeth to Rev. T.M. Boyd, May 12, 1887: Sue declared that her Nez Perce converts had always meant to go to other heathen tribes as evangelists. Peter Lindsley had once lived with the Crows. Sue McBeth to Mr. Rankin, October 4, 1887: In this letter Sue stated that the Nez Perces had a zeal to convert the Lemhis, Shoshones and affiliated bands such as the Bannocks.
- ³ McBeth, *The Nez Perces Since Lewis and Clark*, pp. 209-211.
- ⁴ Enoch Pond [from Pendleton, Oregon] to Kate McBeth, February 12, 1901.
- ⁵ McBeth, *The Nez Perces Since Lewis and Clark*, p. 209.
- ⁶ James Hayes [from Blackfoot, Idaho] to Kate McBeth, November 26, 1906.
- ⁷ Miss Frost to Kate McBeth, Sabbath Eve, March 20, 1907.
- ⁸ *Ibid.*, April 23, 1907.
- ⁹ James Hayes to Kate McBeth, June 13, 1904.
- ¹⁰ *Ibid.*, February 27, March 3, 1905; March 7, 1907.
- ¹¹ Helen M. Clark to Miss McBeth and Crawford, November 19, 1908.
- ¹² James Hayes [from Ross Fork, Idaho] to Kate McBeth, May 29, 1899.
- ¹³ James Hayes [from Shem, Utah] to Kate McBeth, November 16, 1906.
- ¹⁴ Crawford, *The Nez Perces Since Spalding*, p. 45.
- ¹⁵ *Occident*, December 31, 1896; p. 2; pp. 13-14. *Assembly Herald*, 1896-1897.
- ¹⁶ Minnie M. Rumsey, "The Lady with the Broken Heart," *Women and Missions*, April, 1837.

- 17 A.J. Ralston to Kate McBeth, September 1, 1904.
- 18 McBeth, *The Nez Perces Since Lewis and Clark*, p. 15.
- 19 A.J. Ralston to Kate McBeth, January 3, 1909.
- 20 McBeth, *The Nez Perces Since Lewis and Clark*, pp. 84; 200-201.
- 21 *Ibid.*
- 22 Kate McBeth to Mrs. E.E. Dye, June 22, 1905.
- 23 *History of North Idaho*, p. 130.
- 24 Women's Board of Home Missions to Kate McBeth, December 30, 1901. Ella A. Boole to Kate McBeth, March 5, 1909.
- 25 Kate McBeth, "Nez Perce Indians and the Perplexities of Civilization," *Home Mission Monthly*, vol. 28, pp. 81-82, February, 1914. *Oregonian*, October 19, 1913. Kate C. McBeth and Mary M. Crawford, "The Rise and Fall of King Alcohol in the Nez Perce Country," *Red Man*, vol. 7, p. 259.
- 26 Lewiston Teller, July 14, 1890.
- 27 McBeth, *The Nez Perces Since Lewis and Clark*, pp. 180-182.
- 28 Crawford, *The Nez Perces Since Spalding*, p. 28: "They were camped with the Second Kamiah Church . . . Dr. Ghormley . . . and I were invited to elder Felix Corbett's home for Sabbath day dinner . . . and it was there that Dr. Ghormley suggested . . ."
- 29 *Ibid.*, p. 29. Note: Various translations have been given for 'Talmaks': Crawford says it means "A Butte on the Prairie." C.M. Drury, "The Beginnings of Talmaks," privately printed pamphlet, p. 8, "Gallop Over the Butte." M. Alfreda Elsensohn, *Pioneer Days in Idaho County*, vol. II, p. 506, quotes Archie Finney [letter, September 20, 1946] suggesting the verb 'tal-maks-it' or "the artistry of Jack Frost, the first turning of leaves to bright yellow in the fall on the high prominence."
- 30 "Nez Perce Camp Meeting," *The Carlisle Arrow*, July 20, 1915.
- 31 John Frank, "The Nez Perce Indian Campmeeting," 1913 [pamphlet].
- 32 *Ibid.*
- 33 Crawford, *The Nez Perces Since Spalding*, p. 29.
- 34 *Ibid.*, p. 11.
- 35 McBeth, *Journal I*, January 26, 1883.
- 36 Susan McBeth to Dr. and Mrs. A.L. Lindsley, January 10, 1885. Gay, *Choup-Nit-Ki*, pp. 104, 237.
- 37 McBeth, *The Nez Perces Since Lewis and Clark*, p. 182: "They love to sing, and they would gladly put in every minute between meetings (and none of the meetings are short) singing. I used to wonder at Miss Crawford's power of endurance, but one of the young men evidently voiced the sentiments of all when he told her, 'We can rest after camp-meeting, when we cannot learn new songs.'"
- 38 Crawford, *The Nez Perces Since Spalding*, p. 28.
- 39 *Ibid.*, pp. 31-38.
- 40 *The Carlisle Arrow*, July 20, 1915.

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INDEX

- Adair, Alexander, 308, 347, 357-359
 Alexander, Captain & Mrs. 134-135,
 143, 145
 death, Mrs., 139-140
 Allotment Act, 294, 297
 payment, 349-351
 Allen, Mr. John & Mrs., 321-322, 328
 Mrs. 335
 Alton, Illinois
 Prison, 114-117, 124-125
 American Board of Commissioners,
 104, 107, 146
 Anderson, John, 94, 98-99
 Ainsley, Goerge, 20, 24, 27, 30, 36, 104-
 105, 146, 159
 Arthur, Mark, 259-261, 309, 327-328, 381
 Axtell, Juliet L., 286-287, 338, 353, 369-371
- Bell, Launcelot Graham, 89, 93, note 390
 Boyd, Robert, 60- 66-69, 270
 Boyd, T.M., 69, 349
 Briggs, Edson, 296, 301, 303, 314-315, 328
 Brooks, Abraham, 61- 202, 208, 259, 280-
 281, 285-286, 301, 326, 335
 Brooks, Mary, 321 (Mrs. Abraham)
 Brookes, Dr. James, 71, 120-121, 132-134,
 137, 140, 144, note, 393
 Brown, L.P., 203, 216, 246, 248, 267, 286
 Brown, Mrs. L.P., 341-343
- Camas Prairie, 30, 51-59, 64, 180, 228, 235,
 317
 Cold Spring 169, 196, 297
 Homesteaders 351
 Campbell, Mr. & Mrs. Walter, 171, 173,
 176, 180-182, 187, 189, 217, 243, 251, 256
 273
 Carlisle, Pennsylvania, 328-329, 334
 Catholic, 16, 23, 46, 190, 315, 364
 Churches:
 Kamiah, First, 34, 174, 177, 300, 304-305
 314, 316
 Kamiah, Second, 318-320, 339-340, 346
 Spalding, 257, semi-cetennial, 264,
 moved, 321
 Alder Creek, 281, 374
 Meadow Creek, 374
 North Fork, 374
 Clearwater River, 19, 27, 45, 52, 54-55, 63-
 65, 180, 237, 260
- Connors, Eddie, 300-301, 332, 359, 381
 Corbett, Felix, 45, 52, 180, 187, 195, 227,
 259, 290, 315, 317-318
 at General Assembly, 300
 Sarah, first wife, 179, 197, 220, dies, 317-
 318
 Susie Reuben, second wife, 327
 Corbett, Paul, 276, 281, 318
 Corbett, Kentuck, 54, 57, 255
 Corbett, Mrs. Kentuck, 188-189, 191-
 192, 202, 212, dies, 213-214
 Cowley, Henry T., 22, 29, 32-33, 35
 Crawford, Elizabeth, 346, 348
 Crawford, Maizie, 330, 346, 348, 352, 361,
 373, 377, 379
 Crea, John, 245, 251, 255, 291
 Crows, 239, 273, 281, 343
 Pow-ka-tas, 26
 Cunningham, Mrs. D.A.
 Beaver, Pennsylvania, 151-2, 172
- Deffenbaugh, George, 62, 66-67, 69, 173,
 176, 182, 184, 187, 195, 204, 214-217, 222
 226-230, 239-240, 258, 271, 273-275, 281
 284, 287
 Deffenbaugh, Mrs. George (2nd wife)
 250, 252, 257-258, 264, dies, 270
- Eaves, Family, 282, 287, 301, 308
 Edwards, Family, 252, 258
 Ellinwood, F.F., 44, 209, 245-246, 251-252,
 253, 319
- Fee, R.N., Joseph War, 52-59, 171
 Fires, 188, 206, 262, 302-303
 Fletcher, Alice C., 292-336, 347, 353
 Fourth of July, 41, 65-66, 180, 189-190, 195
 205, 214, 227, 234-241, 261, 274-278,
 286-287, 300-301, 312-313, 324-325, 333-
 334, 354-359, 373-377
 Fraser, Julia, 371-374
 Frost, Miss, 365-366, 368
- Gay, Jane, 292-336, 347, 353, 360
 Grant, James, 259, 282
 Gunn, Thomas M., 316, 355
- Hayes, Harry, 248, 331
 Hayes, Hattie (Mrs. Harry), 254

Hayes, James, 68-69, 179, 200, 214, 231, 256, 273, 280, 287, 308, 331, 342, 355, 364-369, honorary degree, 369, death, 376

Hayes, Fannie (Mrs. Harry), 211, 220

Hedges, James, A., 357-359

Hill, Tom, 229, 237-240, 254-281

Hines, James, 32-33, 60, 64, 67, 214, 217, 256, 258

Holidays:

Christmas, 26, 44, 106, 175, 185-187, 201, 209, 218, 249, 252-253, 261, 265, 282, 319

New Years, 202, 282

Thanksgiving, 200, 252, 264, 319, 328

Horses, 64, 67, 195, 196, 217, 239, 282, 297

Howard, O.O., 41, 43, 47-48, visits Sue, 49-51, 59, 61, 70, 155

Iowa, 71, 86

Fairfield, 17, 70, 89-99, 100-103, 108-110, 158

Keokuk, 88, 91

Sigourney, 71, 97-100, 110, 158

Illness, 254, 270-271, 340-341

dysentery, 262

"la grippe," 203, 330

small pox, 192, 306-307

Johnson, Mary, 183, 189, 194, 197, 220

Johnson, W.E. "Pussyfoot," 378

Jefferson Barracks, 17, 32, see U.S.

Christian Commission

Joseph, Chief, 41, 43, 47, 228, 275, 302, 310-311, 314, 354, 359

Joseph War, 47-48, 51-59

Kamiah, 20, 25-26, 28-30, 171

Joseph War, 51-55

Kane, Captain, 250, 261-263, 285, note, 404

Kane, Peter (son), 263

King George's Men, 65-66

Ladd, William Mead, 59, 338, 371

Ladd, Mrs. William Mead, 286, 319, 321, 331

Lapwai, 19, 28, 249-253

Joseph War, 54, 57-59

Laverty Academy, 100, 151

Law, Eben, 70, 114-125, 126, 134-136, 140-144, 145

Lawyer, Chief, 33, death, 40, Lawyer's widow, 181

Lawyer, Archie, 32-34, 40-41, 60, 67, 69, 176, 179, 183-187, 233-234, 259, 265, 272-273, 280-281, 284-285, 309-310, 315, 318-319, 339-340, 343, death 348
Amy (new wife), 280, 285

Lawyer, James (Jimmie), 32-34, 40-41, 51, 60, 67, 69, 179, 200-201, 208, 210 225-226, 229, 232, 237, 354

Lawyer, Mrs., (Jimmie) 208, 211, 216, 219

Lewiston, 15-16, 28, 59, 205-206, 229, 247, 256, 275-277, 294, 302, 333, 349, 350, 379, 381

Lindsley, Rev. Aaron & Mrs., 59, 164, 205, 221, 233

Lindsley, Mrs., 337, 342

Lindsley, Peter & Nancy, 69, 179-180, 201, 207, 214, 215, 259, 272, 296, 300, 308

Lindsley, Nancy (Mrs. Peter), 220, 322
Lindsley, Amelia (daughter) death, 230

Lowrie, John C., 31, 36-37, 44, 46, 60-63, 70, 103, 174, 178-179, 212-213, 215

Lowrie, John M., 78, 90

Lowery, David P., 152

Lowrie, Joseph, 179, 258-259, 272, 280, death, 306

McBeth

Alexander (father) 31, 72-73, 75-76, death 79

Mary (mother) see above, 80-83, 89-90, 127, 149, death 146

Robert (brother) 79, 87, 127-128, 130-131, 148, 150, 156, 158, 198, 261

Kate, arrives in Idaho, 70, childhood, 71-79, education, 85, teaching, 91-101, 149-156, accused by C.

Monteith, 209, death 381

Sue, arrives in Idaho, 15, teaching, 91-101, 108, education 85, Choctaws, 101-107, Jefferson Barracks 113-119, 120, 125-132, St. Louis, 136-139, 141, 144-145, Kamiah, 30-36; moved to Mt. Idaho, 242, accused by C. Monteith, 222-225, death 341.

McConville, Colonel Edward & Mrs., 198 204, 251, 301, 310, 318, 328, 333, note, 398, 399

McCume, Samuel M., 93, 97-98, 109

Monteith, Charles, 25, 195, 199, 202, 209, 222-225, 237-239, 263, 291, 308, 332, 349

Monteith, John, 15, 20, 25, 28-29, 37, 44, 46, 50, 52, 61, 175, 190, 198, 224

Monteith, Moses, 69, 231, 248, 272, 308, 319

- Monteith, W.J., 15, 19, 38, death, 43
 Moody, Dwight L., 142-143
 Moses, Jim, 280, 283, 285, 300
 Mt. Idaho, 28, 203, 242, 298, 302, 347
 Myths, 64-65, 326-372
- New Carlisle, 247, 278-279, 339
 Nez Perce
 Dictionary, 38-39, 43, 342, 344-345
 Missionary Society, 321-323
 Nine Pipes, 55, 237-241, 308
 Norris, George, 274-277, 306, 313,
 dismissed, 290
- Ohio, 174
 Steubenville, 85, 185, 258
 Wellsville, 20, 40, 71-85, 149-151, 157,
 187-188, 204, 344-346
- Oklahoma, 71
 Choctaw Mission, History of, 146-147,
 153
 Choctaw Territory, 17, 20, 27, 32, 103-
 108
 Nez Perce Exiles, 184, 227-230
- Parker, Aaron Foster, 248, 256, note, 403
 Parker (the miller), 199-200, 204, 257, 264
 Parsons, Robert, 248, 272, 331, 353
- Pennsylvania, 174
 Beaver Seminary, 151
 Brighton (Beaver Falls), 185-187, 218
 North Sewickley Academy, 71, 87, 146,
 152
 Philadelphia, 22, 37
 Pittsburgh, 68, 77, 156
 Washington, 322
- Perry, Colonel, 54
 Perry, Mrs., 42, 48
- Pond, Enoch, 69, 183, 193, 258, 273, 280
 Pond, Rachael, 181, 253, 255, 285
 Pond, Enoch & Rachel, 187, 191-192,
 194-195, 249, 363-364
- Portland, Oregon, 59-60, 163-164
- Presbyterian Church, 23-24, 76, 78-83,
 101, 133, 152, 155, 177, 234, 242, 253,
 332, 337
- Presbyterian Board of Foreign Missions,
 22-23, 35-36, 44, 46, 104, 174-177, 209,
 215, 221, 244-246, 279, 305, 339, 343
- Publications
 Nez Perce Hymnal, 368-371
 Nez Percés, Since Lewis and Clar, 371-
 372
 Practical Talks, 121, 126, 130, 145
 Seeds Scattered Broadcast, 121, 128-
 130
- Railroad, 191, 195, 302, 344
 Rankin, William, 250, 268-269
 Ralston, A.J., 40, 80, 83-85, 92, 140-141,
 160-162, 371-373
 Ralston, William Chapman, 40, 83, 92,
 114-115, 155
 Reboin, Edward, 356
 Reboin, Mrs. Edward, (Mary), 321
 Redfield, F.M., Joseph War, 46, 52-57,
 233
 Reuben, James, 179, 184, 214, 265, 271-
 272, 291, 334, 356
 Reuben, Stephen, 259
 Reuben, Mrs. Susie, 321, 327
 Robbins, Warren D., 308, 329
 Rumsey, Mrs. I.P., 287, 338-339, 369
- San Francisco, 160-161, 373
- Schools
 Sabbath Schools, 182-187, 200, 202, 208
 265, 280
 Kamiah, 174, 176-179, 208, 211-213, 217
 222, 241
 Lapwai, 252-253, 280, 282, 319
 Mt. Idaho, 278-280 see New Carlisle &
 Mt. Idaho
 Scott, Wallace, 203, 267
 Scott, Mrs. Wallace, 253, 286, 341, 343
 Shoshones, 362-363, 368
 Sibley, Mrs. Mary Easton, 60-63, 141-144,
 note 388
 Smith, Asa, 33, 64
 Smith, Mrs. Asa, 183
 Snake River, 28, 39, 164, 190-191, 228,
 331
 Spalding, H.H., 16, 20-21, 23, 25-26, 31-32
 43, 64, 79, 84-85, 172, 271, 325, death
 29, 264
 Spalding, Mrs. H.H. (Eliza Hart), 29,
 31, 54, 181, 264
- St. Louis, 111-113, 133, 248
 Home for Young Women, 137-145
- Stuart, James, 230-231, 296, 301-302, 306-
 307, 313, 314-315, 334-335
 Stuart, Mrs. James (Harriet), 306-307
- Talmaks, 375-377, 381
 Temperance, 41, 349-350, 375-381
 Thaw, Mrs. Henry K., 319, 329, 346-349,
 360
 Timothy, death 192, note 398
 Timothy, Mrs., 321
 Titus, 250, 262
- Underground Railroad, 75, 82-83, 92,
 126-127, 149

U.S. Christian Commission, 49, 110, 113-114, 119-123, 125-132

Wallowa, 24, 28, 39-40, 64, 191, 311

Wallula & Fort Walla Walla, 28, 45, 167, 191, 228, 350

Warner, Agent John, 169, 180, 224

Washington, D.C., 20, 25, 39, 62, 175, 227, 239-240, 242, 256-257, 263, 271, 295, 302, 305, 310, 329, 333-334, 344

Waters, George, 52, 189-190

Webber, Henry, 152, death 153

Webber, Mrs. Henry (Lula), 153

Wee-ipe, 28, 45, 189, 235

Wheeler, William, 69, 179, 183, 195, ordained, 196, 214, 230, 256

Wheeler, Mrs. William (Martha), 194, 211, 215

Whitman, Marcus, 16, 23, 79, 84-85, 167, 181, 264-265

Whitman, Perrin, 38

Whitman, Silas, 69, 183, 212, 229, 258, 262, 270, 274, 281, 308, 316

Whitman, Mrs. Silas (Katie, 1st wife) dies, 193

Whitman, Mrs. Silas (Martha, 2nd wife), 195-196, 283-284

Whitman, Solomon, 187, 195, 201, 208-209, 221, 226, 229, 266, 290, 328

Whitman, Solomon Mr. & Mrs., 199, 202-204, 206, 210, 262

Whitman, Mrs. Solomon, 179, 194, 217, 220, 222

Whitman, Charlotte, (daughter), 230

Williams, Luke, 315

Williams, Mrs. Luke, 209

Williams, Mark, 32, 53, 184, 198, 200-201, death 210

Williams, Mrs. Mark (Sarah), 179, 210, 213, 220

Williams, Katie (daughter), 210

Williams, Jonathan "Uncle Billy," 35, 45, 63-65, 181, 187, 201, 232, 245, 256, 315-316, 326, 352-353, death, 353

Williams, (Billy's mother), 221

Williams, Robert, 32, 38, 53, 60, 67-69, ordained, 69, 167-168, 174, 176-179, 182, 195, 198, 205, 208, 210, 212, 215, 217-218, 225-227, 231, 235, 254-256, 258, 266, 271, 278, 289-291, 302, 207-309, 315, 329, 331, 341-342

Williams, Mrs. Robert (Lucy), 205

Yellow Bear, 237

Yellow Bull, 303

Young People's Society of Christian Endeavor, 321, 348



Allen Morrill and Eleanor Dunlap met in the graduate school of Harvard University from widely diverse backgrounds. Allen had grown up in Massachusetts and done his undergraduate work at Brown University, where he taught while securing his master's degree. A pioneer doctor's daughter, Eleanor was born and lived on the Nez Perce Reservation at the Camas Prairie in Idaho. Her undergraduate degree is from Whitman College; she taught English in the high school of Moscow, Idaho. During their undergraduate years, both were elected to Phi Beta Kappa.

After Eleanor received her M.A. degree and Allen his Ph.D. in English literature and language, they were married and merged their research projects. They made numerous trips to Idaho, where they began collecting material on Sue and Kate McBeth, Presbyterian missionaries, and their experiences with the Nez Percés. Dr. Morrill has taught in Pennsylvania: Washington and Jefferson College and Geneva College, where he was academic dean; Michigan Technological University; Monmouth College, Illinois.

Dr. and Mrs. Morrill have cooperated in publishing articles in the JOURNAL OF PRESBYTERIAN HISTORY, IDAHO YESTERDAYS, and INCREDIBLE IDAHO. As one reads OUT OF THE BLANKET, it will become evident that the authors' complementary backgrounds, one from New England and the other from Idaho, have laid the basis for this vital account. It covers those years 1873 to 1915 on the Nez Perce Reservation following the early pioneering efforts of Henry Harmon Spalding.

